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R L

AKENSIDE.

Freſh flowers I'd ſtrew to ſprinkle on the turf
Where Shakeſpeare lies.

Engraved for W. G. Pepoe

THE

WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS,

WITH

LIVES OF THE AUTHORS.

EDITED BY

ROBERT WALSH, JR.

VOL. XXVIII.

AKENSIDE, COOPER, THOMPSON.

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Page
Hymn to Health: written in Sickness, . . . 242
Song, ... 243
Song to Winifreda, ... 244
A Father's Advice to his Son, ... 245
The Tomb of Shakspeare, ... 249
Ver-Vert; or, the Nunnery Parrot: an Heroic Poem, in four Cantos.
Canto I. 256
Canto II. 264
Canto III. 272
Canto IV. 278

SELECT POEMS OF WILLIAM THOMPSON.

Life of Thompson, ... 289
Sickness: in five Books.
Book I. 293
Notes and Allusions to Book I. 302
The Palace of Disease, Book II. 306
Notes and Allusions to Book II. 318
The Progress of Sickness, Book III. 323
Notes and Allusions to Book III. 334
The Recovery, Book IV. 336
Notes and Allusions to Book IV. 349
The Thanksgiving, Book V. 352
Notes and Allusions to Book V. 364
Hymn to May, ... 370

CONTENTS OF VOL. XXVIII.

SELECT POEMS OF MARK AKENSIDE.

Page

LIFE OF AKENSIDE, ... 3

The Pleasures of Imagination: a Poem, in three Books.

The Design, ... 13

Book I. 19

Book II. 43

Book III. 73

The Pleasures of Imagination, on an Enlarged Plan.

General Argument, ... 103

Book I. 105

Book II. 129

Book III. unfinished, ... 153

Book IV. a Fragment, ... 171

Epistle to Curio, ... 179

Hymn to the Naiads, ... 190

SELECT POEMS OF JOHN GILBERT COOPER.

Life of Cooper, ... 211

Epistles to his Friends in Town, from Aristippus in Retirement.

Advertisement, ... 217

Epistle I. The Retreat of Aristippus, . . 218

Epistle II. The Temper of Aristippus, . 224

Epistle IV. The Call of Aristippus, . . 235

Page
Hymn to Health: written in Sickness, . . 242
Song, ... 243
Song to Winifreda, ... 244
A Father's Advice to his Son, ... 245
The Tomb of Shakspeare, ... 249
Ver-Vert; or, the Nunnery Parrot: an Heroic Poem, in four Cantos.
Canto I. 256
Canto II. 264
Canto III. 272
Canto IV. 278

SELECT POEMS OF WILLIAM THOMPSON.

Life of Thompson, ... 289
Sickness: in five Books.
Book I. 293
Notes and Allusions to Book I. 302
The Palace of Disease, Book II. 306
Notes and Allusions to Book II. 318
The Progress of Sickness, Book III. 323
Notes and Allusions to Book III. 334
The Recovery, Book IV. 336
Notes and Allusions to Book IV. 349
The Thanksgiving, Book V. 352
Notes and Allusions to Book V. 364
Hymn to May, ... 370

SELECT POEMS

OF

MARK AKENSIDE:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY DR. JOHNSON.

THE

LIFE OF AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcastle upon Tyne. His father, Mark, was a butcher, of the Presbyterian sect; his mother's name was Mary Lumsden. He received the first part of his education at the grammar-school of Newcastle; and was afterwards instructed by Mr. Wilson, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was sent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himself for the office of a dissenting minister, and received some assistance from the fund which the Dissenters employ in educating young men of scanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other scenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to study physic, and repaid that contribution, which, being received for a different purpose, he justly thought it dishonourable to retain.

Akenside was one of those poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of those students who have very early stored their memories with sentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greatest work, 'The Pleasures of Imagination,' appeared in 1744. I have heard Dodsley, by whom it was

published, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was an hundred and twenty pounds, being such as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, advised him not to make a niggardly offer; for 'this was no every-day writer.'

In 1741 he went to Leyden, in pursuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of physic, having, according to the custom of the Dutch Universities, published a thesis or dissertation. The subject which he chose was 'The Original and Growth of the Human Fœtus;' in which he is said to have departed, with great judgment, from the opinion then established, and to have delivered that which has been since confirmed and received.

Akenside was a young man, warm with every notion that by nature or accident had been connected with the sound of liberty, and, by an eccentricity which such dispositions do not easily avoid, a lover of contradiction, and no friend to any thing established. He adopted Shaftesbury's foolish assertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the discovery of truth. For this he was attacked by Warburton, and defended by Dyson: Warburton afterwards reprinted his remarks at the end of his dedication to the 'Freethinkers.'

The result of all the arguments which have been produced in a long and eager discussion of this idle question, may easily be collected. If ridicule be applied to any position as the test of truth, it will then become a question whether such ridicule be just; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the test of ridicule. Two men, fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for a while equally exposed to the inevitable consequences of cowardice, contemptuous censure, and ludicrous representation; and the true state of

both cases must be known, before it can be decided whose terror is rational, and whose is ridiculous; who is to be pitied, and who to be despised. Both are for awhile equally exposed to laughter, but both are not therefore equally contemptible.

In the revisal of his poem, though he died before he had finished it, he omitted the lines which had given occasion to Warburton's objections.

He published, soon after his return from Leyden, (1745) his first collection of odes; and was impelled by his rage of patriotism to write a very acrimonious epistle to Pulteney, whom he stigmatizes, under the name of Curio, as the betrayer of his country.

Being now to live by his profession, he first commenced physician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouse then practised, with such reputation and success, that a stranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenside tried the contest a while unsuccessfully, and removed to Hamstead, where he resided more than two years, and then fixed himself in London, the proper place for a man of accomplishments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was still to make his way as a physician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that a Mr. Dyson, with an ardour of friendship that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus supported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A physician in a great city seems to be the mere plaything of fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the most part, totally casual: they that employ him know not his excellence; they that reject him know not his deficience. By an acute observer, who had looked on the transactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the fortune of physicians.

Akenside appears not to have been wanting to his

own success: he placed himself in view by all the common methods: he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge; and was admitted into the College of Physicians; he wrote little poetry, but published, from time to time, medical essays and observations: he became Physician to Saint Thomas's Hospital; he read the Gulstonian Lectures in Anatomy: but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture, a history of the revival of Learning, from which he soon desisted; and, in conversation, he very eagerly forced himself into notice by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature.

His Discourse on the Dysentery (1764) was considered as a very conspicuous specimen of Latinity, which entitled him to the same height of place among the scholars as he possessed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have risen to a greater elevation of character, but that his studies were ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

Akenside is to be considered as a didactic and lyric poet. His great work is the 'Pleasures of Imagination;' a performance which, published as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raised expectations that were not very amply satisfied. It has undoubtedly a just claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquisitions; of a young mind stored with images, and much exercised in combining and comparing them.

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustra-

tions; and it is not easy in such exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden, like Butler's Moon, by a 'Veil of Light;' they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress. *Pars minima est ipsa puella sui.* The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind, and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion, sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted, but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps superior to any other writer of blank verse; his flow is smooth, and his pauses are musical; but the concatenation of his verses is commonly too long continued, and the full close does not recur with sufficient frequency. The sense is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauses, and, as nothing is distinguished nothing, is remembered.

The exemption which blank verse affords from the necessity of closing the sense with the couplet betrays luxuriant and active minds into such self-indulgence, that they pile image upon image, ornament upon ornament, and are not easily persuaded to close the sense at all. Blank verse will therefore, I fear, be too often found ind escription exuberant, in argument loquacious, and in narration tiresome.

His diction is certainly poetical as it is not prosaic, and elegant as it is not vulgar. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of disgust than

most of his brethren of the blank song. He rarely either recals old phrases, or twists his metre into harsh inversions.

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to revise and augment this work, but died before he had completed his design. He seems to have somewhat contracted his diffusion; but I know not whether he has gained in closeness what he has lost in splendour. In the additional book, the Tale of Solon is too long.

One great defect of his poem is very properly censured by Mr. Walker, unless it may be said in his defence, that what he has omitted was not properly in his plan. 'His picture of man is grand and beautiful, but unfinished. The immortality of the soul, which is the natural consequence of the appetites and powers she is invested with, is scarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply supplied by the masterly pencil of Dr. Young; who, like a good philosopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the grandeur of his conceptions, and the meanness and misery of his state.

His other poems are now to be considered; but a short consideration will despatch them. It is not easy to guess why he addicted himself so diligently to lyric poetry, having neither the ease and airiness of the lighter, nor the vehemence and elevation of the grander ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers seem to desert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expression nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet such was his love of lyrics, that, having written with great vigour and poignancy his 'Epistle to Curio,' he transformed it afterwards into an ode disgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be said; the sentiments commonly want force, nature, or no-

velty; the diction is sometimes harsh and uncouth, the stanzas ill-constructed and unpleasant, and the rhymes dissonant, or unskilfully disposed, too distant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to established use, and therefore perplexing to the ear which in a short composition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

To examine such compositions singly cannot be required; they have doubtless brighter and darker parts: but, when they are once found to be generally dull, all further labour may be spared; for to what use can the work be criticised that will not be read?

Thomas Campbell's opinion of Akenside's great poem is conveyed in the following terms: 'In the purely ethical and didactic parts of his subject he displays a high zeal of classical feeling, and a graceful development of the philosophy of taste. Though his metaphysics may not be always invulnerable, his general ideas of moral truth are lofty and prepossessing. He is peculiarly eloquent in those passages in which he describes the final causes of our emotions of taste: he is equally skilful in delineating the processes of memory and association; and he gives an animated view of Genius collecting her stores for works of excellence. All his readers must recollect with what a happy brilliancy he comes out in the simile of art and nature, dividing our admiration when he compares them to the double appearance of the Sun distracting his Persian worshipper. But "non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto." The sweetness which we miss in Akenside is that which should arise from the direct representations of life, and its warm realities and affections. We seem to pass in his poem through a gallery of pictured abstractions rather than of pictured things. He reminds us of odours which we enjoy artificially extracted from the flower, instead of inhaling them from its natu-

ral blossom. It is true that his object was to teach and explain the nature of mind, and that his subject led him necessarily into abstract ideas; but it admitted also of copious scenes, full of solid human interest, to illustrate the philosophy which he taught.

'Poetry, whatever be its title, should not make us merely contemplate existence, but feel it over again. That descriptive skill which expounds to us the nature of our own emotions, is rather a sedative than a stimulant to enthusiasm. The true poet renovates our emotions, and is not content with explaining them. Even in a philosophical poem on the imagination, Akenside might have given historical tablets of the power which he delineated; but his illustrations for the most part only consist in general ideas fleetingly personified. There is but one pathetic passage (I think) in the whole poem, namely, that in which he describes the lover embracing the urn of his deceased mistress. In treating of novelty he is rather more descriptive; we have the youth breaking from domestic endearments in quest of knowledge, the sage over his midnight lamp, the virgin at her romance, and the village matron relating her stories of witchcraft. Short and compressed as those sketches are, they are still beautiful glimpses of reality, and it is expressly from observing the relief which they afford to his didactic and declamatory passages, that we are led to wish that he had appealed more frequently to examples from nature.'

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

A POEM

IN THREE BOOKS.

Ασεβης μεν εν ανθρωπω τας παρα τω θεω χαριτας ατιμαζων.

EPICT. apud Arrian. II. 21.

1744.

THE

DESIGN.

There are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense, and the faculties of moral perception; they have been called by a very general name, The Powers of Imagination. Like the external senses, they relate to matter and motion; and, at the same time, give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite pleasures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recal the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing Arts; some of which, as Painting and Sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in Nature; others, as Music and Poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

But these Arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were of course led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers; especially Poetry, which, making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates,

is consequently become an unlimited representative of every species and mode of being. Yet as their intention was only to express the objects of the Imagination, and as they still abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they of course retain their original character; and all the different pleasures which they excite, are termed, in general, Pleasures of Imagination.

The design of the following Poem is to give a view of these, in the largest acceptation of the term; so that whatever our Imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of Nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with, either in Poetry, Painting, Music, or any of the elegant Arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind, which are here established and explained.

In executing this general plan, it was necessary first of all to distinguish the Imagination from our other faculties; and in the next place to characterize those original forms or properties of being, about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties, Mr. Addison had reduced to the three general classes of greatness, novelty, and beauty; and into these we may analyze every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the Imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of pleasure; and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which, the imitative Arts, especially Poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite

foreign to the Imagination, insomuch, that in every line of the most applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes; or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper to awaken and engage the Passions. It was therefore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of pleasure; especially that from the passions, which, as it is supreme in the noblest work of human genius, so being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an Allegory to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject, which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest the mind, a pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from Ridicule, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the Arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here, too, a change of style became necessary; such an one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of composition in the serious parts of the subject; nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expressions of the mock-heroic, or the familiar and poetical raillery of professed satire; neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all Imitation being thus laid

open, nothing now remained but to illustrate some particular pleasures which arise either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind, is that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early association of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of Poetry, and the other Arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects described. Then follows a general account of the production of these elegant Arts, and of the secondary pleasure, as it is called, arising from the resemblance of the imitations to the original appearances of Nature. After which, the work concludes with some reflections on the general conduct of the powers of Imagination, and on their natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models; that ancient and simple one of the first Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in the Georgics; and the familiar epistolary way of Horace. This latter has several advantages. It admits of a greater variety of style; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation; and, especially with the assistance of rhyme, leads to a closer and more concise expression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily ap-

plied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy, that the public taste is in a great measure formed to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetic, and figured style. This too appeared more natural; as the author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation; as, by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonize the Imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similar taste and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. 'Tis on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the Author of Nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on; and also to unite the moral excellencies of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil (the faultless model of didactic poetry) will best support him in this particular. For the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION,

AS FIRST PUBLISHED.

BOOK THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Difficulty of treating it poetically. The ideas of the Divine Mind, the origin of every quality pleasing to the Imagination. The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men; with its final cause. The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords. All the primary pleasures of the Imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects. The pleasure from greatness, with its final cause. Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause. Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause. The connection of beauty with truth and good applied to the conduct of life. Invitation to the study of Moral Philosophy. The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects: colour; shape; natural concrètes; vegetables; animals; the mind. The sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind. The connection of the Imagination and the moral faculty. Conclusion.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK I.

With what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores
Which beauteous Imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil,
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle powers
Of musical delight! and while I sing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.
  Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakspeare lies, be present: and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air,
Which, by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and shifts at will, through countless [forms,
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,

Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! descend
And join this festive train? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
Majestic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come
Her sister, Liberty will not be far.
Be present all ye Genii, who conduct
The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,
New to your springs and shades: who touch hi
With finer sounds; who heighten to his eye [ea
The bloom of Nature; and before him turn
The gayest, happiest attitude of things.
  Oft have the laws of each poetic strain
The critic-verse employ'd; yet still unsung
Lay this prime subject, though importing most
A poet's name: for fruitless in the' attempt,
By dull obedience and by creeping toil
Obscure, to conquer the severe ascent
Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
Must fire the chosen genius; Nature's hand
Must string his nerves, and imp his eagle-wings,
Impatient of the painful steep, to soar
High as the summit; there to breathe at large
Ethereal air; with bards and sages old,
Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes
To this neglected labour court my song;
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task
To paint the finest features of the mind,
And to most subtle and mysterious things
Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love
Of Nature and the Muses bids explore,
Through secret paths erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring thoughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flowers

Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.
From Heaven my strains begin; from Heaven descends
The flame of genius to the human breast,
And love and beauty, and poetic joy,
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun
Sprang from the east, or mid the vault of night
The moon suspended her serener lamp;
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,
Or Wisdom taught the sons of men her lore;
Then liv'd the' Almighty One; then, deep-retir'd,
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms,
The forms eternal of created things:
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods and streams, the rolling globe,
And Wisdom's mien celestial. From the first
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration: till in time complete,
What he admir'd and lov'd his vital smile
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organic frame;
Hence the green earth, and wild-resounding waves;
Hence light and shade alternate; warmth and cold;
And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things.
But not alike to every mortal eye
Is this great scene unveil'd. For since the claims
Of social life, to different labours urge
The active powers of man; with wise intent
The hand of Nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a different bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,

The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
The golden zones of Heaven: to some she gave
To weigh the moment of eternal things,
Of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick impulse: others by the hand
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue swells the the tender veins
Of herbs and flowers; or what the beams of morn
Draw forth, distilling from the clifted rind
In balmy tears. But some, to higher hopes
Were destin'd; some within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
To these the sire Omnipotent unfolds
The world's harmonious volume, there to read
The transcript of Himself. On every part
They trace the bright impressions of his hand:
In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd
That uncreated beauty, which delights
The mind supreme. They also feel her charms,
Enamour'd; they partake the' eternal joy.
For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, sounded through the warbling air
Unbidden strains; ev'n so did Nature's hand
To certain species of external things,
Attune the finer organs of the mind:
So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve; all naked and alive

They catch the spreading rays: till now the soul
At length discloses every tuneful spring,
To that harmonious movement from without
Responsive. Then the' inexpressive strain
Diffuses its enchantment: Fancy dreams
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss: the intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
And smiles: the passions, gently sooth'd away,
Sink to divine repose, and love and joy
Alone are waking; love and joy, serene
As airs that fan the summer. O! attend,
Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch,
Whose candid bosom the refining love
Of Nature warms, O! listen to my song;
And I will guide thee to her favourite walks,
And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
And point her loveliest features to thy view.
Know then, whate'er of Nature's pregnant stores,
Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected forms
With love and admiration thus inflame
The powers of Fancy, her delighted sons
To three illustrious orders have refer'd:
Three sister-graces, whom the painter's hand,
The poet's tongue confesses: the sublime,
The wonderful, the fair. I see them dawn!
I see the radiant visions, where they rise
More lovely than when Lucifer displays
His beaming forehead through the gates of morn,
To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring.
Say, why was man so eminently rais'd
Amid the vast Creation;* why ordain'd

* In apologizing for the frequent negligencies of the sublimest authors of Greece, 'Those godlike geniuses,' says

Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that the' Omnipotent might send him forth
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice; to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
Of Nature, calls him to his high reward,
The' applauding smile of Heaven? Else wherefor
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope, [burn
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession? Wherefore darts the min
With such resistless ardour to embrace
Majestic forms; impatient to be free,

Longinus, 'were well assured, that Nature had not intende man for a low-spirited or ignoble being: but bringing us int life and the midst of this wide universe, as before a multitude a sembled at some heroic solemnity, that we might be spectator of all her magnificence, and candidates high in emulation for th prize of glory; she has therefore implanted in our souls an inex tinguishable love of every thing great and exalted, of every thin which appears divine beyond our comprehension. Whence i comes to pass, that even the whole world is not an object suffi cient for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, whic often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that surrounds u Let any man cast his eye through the whole circle of our ex istence, and consider how especially it abounds in excellent an grand objects, he will soon acknowledge for what enjoyment and pursuits we were destined. Thus by the very propensit of nature we are led to admire, not little springs or shallow rivu lets, however clear and delicious, but the Nile, the Rhine, th Danube; and, much more than all, the ocean,' &c. Dionys Longin. de Sublim. § xxiv.

Spurning the gross control of wilful might;
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
To Heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view,
Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black
with shade,
And continents of sand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her Heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;
Or, yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and hovering round the sun,
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of Time. Thence, far effus'd,
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets; through its burning signs
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amaz'd she views
The' empyreal waste,* where happy spirits hold,

* 'Ne se pent-il point qu'il y a un grand espace au dela de la region des etoiles? Que ce soit le ciel empyrée, ou non, toujours

Beyond this concave Heaven, their calm abode;
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light*
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world, untir'd
She meditates the' eternal depth below;
Till half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the Sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the' ascent of things enlarge her view
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers
Lie folded up in man; how far beyond
The praise of mortals, may the' eternal growth
Of Nature to perfection half divine,
Expand the blooming soul? What pity then
Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
Her tender blossom, choke the streams of life,

cet espace immense qui environne toute cette region, pourra être rempli de bonheur et de gloire. Il pourra être conceu comme l' ocean, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures bienheureuses, quand elles seront venues a leur perfection dans le systême des étoiles.' Leibnitz dans la Theodicée, part i. § 19.

* It was a notion of the great Mr. Huygens, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, as that their light should not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day.

And blast her spring! Far otherwise design'd
Almighty Wisdom: Nature's happy cares
The' obedient heart far otherwise incline.
Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active [power
To brisker measures: witness the neglect
Of all familiar prospects, though beheld
With transport once;* the fond attentive gaze

* It is here said, that in consequence of the love of novelty, objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind, lose that effect by repeated attention to them. But the instance of habit is opposed to this observation; for there, objects at first distasteful are in time rendered entirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this case will be removed, if we consider that, when objects, at first agreeable, lose that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly passive, and the perception involuntary; but habit, on the other hand, generally supposes choice and activity accompanying it: so that the pleasure arises here not from the object, but from the mind's conscious determination of its own activity; and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will still be urged, perhaps, that a familiarity with disagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to resolve or act at all. In this case, the appearance must be accounted for one of these ways.

The pleasure from habit may be merely negative. The object at first gave uneasiness: this uneasiness gradually wears off as the object grows familiar: and the mind, finding it at last entirely removed, reckons its situation really pleasurable, compared with what it had experienced before.

The dislike conceived of the object at first, might be owing to prejudice or want of attention. Consequently the mind being necessitated to review it often, may at length perceive its own mistake, and be reconciled to what it had looked on with aversion. In which case, a sort of instinctive justice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury, by running toward the other extreme of fondness and attachment.

Or lastly, though the object itself should always continue disagreeable, yet circumstances of pleasure or good fortune may occur along with it. Thus an association may arise in the mind,

Of young astonishment; the sober zeal
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.
For such the bounteous providence of Heaven,
In every breast implanting this desire
Of objects new and strange,* to urge us on
With unremitted labour to pursue
Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,
In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words
To paint its power? For this the daring youth
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
In foreign climes to rove: the pensive sage,
Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
Hangs o'er the sickly taper: and untir'd
The virgin follows, with enchanted step,
The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,
From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,
Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
The wishes of the youth, when every maid
With envy pin'd. Hence finally, by night,
The village-matron round the blazing hearth
Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,
Breathing astonishment! of witching rhymes,
And evil spirits; of the death-bed call

and the object never be remembered without those pleasing circumstances attending it; by which means the disagreeable impression which it at first occasioned will in time be quite obliterated.

* These two ideas are oft confounded; though it is evident the mere novelty of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the least degree of wonder: whereas wonder indeed always implies novelty, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleasure in both cases is explicable from the same final cause, the acquisition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together.

Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd
The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls
Risen from the grave to ease the heavy guilt
Of deeds in life conceal'd: of shapes that walk
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.
At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
With shivering sighs: till eager for the' event,
Around the beldame all erect they hang;
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.
  But lo! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp,
Where beauty onward moving claims the verse
Her charms inspire: the freely-flowing verse
In thy immortal praise, O form divine! [thee,
Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, Beauty,
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
The mossy roofs adore: thou, better sun!
For ever beamest on the' enchanted heart
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetic. Brightest progeny of Heaven!
How shall I trace thy features? where select
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom?—
Haste then, my song, through nature's wide expanse,
Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly
With laughing Autumn to the' Atlantic isles,
And range with him the' Hesperian field, and see
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches shoot with gold; where'er his step
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters glow
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill

As with the blushes of an evening sky?
Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,
Where, gliding through his daughter's honour'd shades,
The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempè's pleasant scene?
Fair Tempè! haunt belov'd of sylvan powers,
Of nymphs and fauns; where in the golden age
They play'd in secret on the shady brink
With ancient Pan: while round their choral steps
Young hours and genial gales with constant hand
Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews,
And Springs elysian bloom. Her flowery store
To thee nor Tempè shall refuse; nor watch
Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits
From thy free spoil. O bear then, unreprov'd,
Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs
Entice her forth to lend her angel-form
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
Thy graceful footsteps; hither, gentle maid,
Incline thy polish'd forehead: let thy eyes
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn;
And may the fanning breezes waft aside
Thy radiant locks: disclosing, as it bends
With airy softness from the marble neck,
The cheek fair-blooming, and the rosy lip,
Where winning smiles and pleasures sweet as love,
With sanctity and wisdom, tempering blend
Their soft allurement. Then the pleasing force
Of Nature, and her kind parental care
Worthier I'd sing: then all the' enamour'd youth,
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre
Should throng attentive, while I point on high

Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd,
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cerulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
To seek the' Idalian bower. Ye smiling band
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze
Of young desire with rival steps pursue
This charm of Beauty; if the pleasing toil
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and trust my words.
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb,
To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean
To bid the jealous thunderer fire the heavens,
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth
To fright you from your joys: my cheerful song
With better omens calls you to the field,
Pleas'd with your generous ardour in the chase,
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health
And active use are strangers? Is her charm
Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitless? Or did Nature mean
This pleasing call the herald of a lie;
To hide the shame of discord and disease,
And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart
Of idle faith? O no! with better cares
The' indulgent mother, conscious how infirm
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
By this illustrious image, in each kind

Still most illustrious where the object holds
Its native powers most perfect, she by this
Illumes the headstrong impulse of desire,
And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe
Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tra
Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,
And every charm of animated things,
Are only pledges of a state sincere,
The' integrity and order of their frame,
When all is well within, and every end
Accomplish'd. Thus was Beauty sent from Heav
The lovely ministress of truth and good
In this dark world: for truth and good are one,
And beauty dwells in them, and they in her,
With like participation.* Wherefore then,

* 'Do you imagine,' says Socrates to Aristippus, 'that wh is good is not beautiful? Have you not observed that these a pearances always coincide? Virtue, for instance, in the same r spect as to which we call it good, is ever acknowledged to beautiful also. In the characters of men we always* join t two denominations together. The beauty of human bodies co responds, in like manner, with that economy of parts which co stitutes them good; and in every circumstance of life, the sa object is constantly accounted both beautiful and good, inasmu as it answers the purposes for which it was designed.' Xen phont. Memorab. Socrat. l. iii. c. 8.

This excellent observation has been illustrated and extend by the noble restorer of ancient philosophy; see the Charact istics, vol. ii. p. 339 and 422, and vol. iii. p. 181. And anoth ingenious author has particularly shown, that it holds in the g neral laws of nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of t sciences. Inquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty a virtue. Treat. i. § 8. As to the connection between beau and truth, there are two opinions concerning it. Some philo

* This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner, by the wor καλοκαγαθοριλο-καγαθια.

O sons of earth! would ye dissolve the tie?
O wherefore, with a rash impetuous aim,
Seek ye those flowery joys with which the hand
Of lavish fancy paints each flattering scene
Where Beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire
Where is the sanction of eternal Truth,
Or where the seal of undeceitful good,
To save your search from folly! Wanting these,
Lo! beauty withers in your void embrace,
And with the glittering of an idiot's toy

phers assert an independent and invariable law in nature, in consequence of which all rational beings must alike perceive beauty in some certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary. And this necessity being supposed the same with that which commands the assent or dissent of the understanding, it follows of course that Beauty is founded on the universal and unchangeable law of Truth.

But others there are, who believe Beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevolent provision in nature to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are best and most perfect in themselves, that so we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without staying to infer their usefulness from their structure and effects; but that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings, of equal capacities for truth, should perceive, one of them beauty, and the other deformity, in the same proportions. And upon this supposition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. Polycletus, for instance, a famous ancient sculptor, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions, which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modelled according to this: a man of mere natural taste, upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confesses and admires its beauty: whereas a professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the neck, or the hand; and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanship to be just and true.

Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
Of youthful hope that shines upon your hearts,
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,
To learn the lore of undeceitful good,
And truth eternal. Though the poisonous charm
Of baleful superstition guide the feet
Of servile numbers, through a dreary way
To their abode, through deserts, thorns, and mire;
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn
To muse at last, amid the ghostly gloom
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;
To walk with spectres through the midnight shade,
And to the screaming owl's accursed song
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart;
Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentler star
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
Where wisdom talk'd with her Athenian songs,
Could my ambitious hand entwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
Then should my powerful verse at once dispel
Those monkish horrors: then in light divine
Disclose the' Elysian prospect, where the steps
Of those whom Nature charms, through blooming walks,
Through fragrant mountains and poetic streams,
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius, and the choir
Of laurell'd science and harmonious art,
Proceed exulting to the' eternal shrine,
Where Truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,
The undivided partners of her sway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,

O let us not a moment pause to join
That godlike band. And if the gracious Power
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song,
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful spirit; then through all our paths,
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre
Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead,
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
Of luxury's allurement; whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve,
And wake the strong divinity of soul
That conquers chance and fate; or whether struck
For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise;
To trace her hallow'd light through future worlds,
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man.
Thus with a faithful aim have we presum'd,
Adventurous, to delineate Nature's form;
Whether in vast, majestic pomp array'd,
Or dress'd for pleasing wonder, or serène
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,
Through various being's fair-proportion'd scale,
To trace the rising lustre of her charms,
From their first twilight, shining forth at length
To full meridian splendour. Of degree
The least and lowliest, in the' effusive warmth
Of colours mingling with a random blaze,
Doth Beauty dwell. Then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd shape,
Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent
Unites this varied symmetry of parts

With colour's bland allurement; as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed,
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.
Then more attractive rise the blooming forms
Through which the breath of Nature has infus'd
Her genial power, to draw with pregnant veins
Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth,
In fruit and seed prolific: thus the flowers
Their purple honours with the Spring resume;
And such the stately tree which Autumn bends
With blushing treasures. But more lovely still
Is Nature's charm, where to the full consent
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,
Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,
And active motion speaks the temper'd soul:
So moves the bird of Juno; so the steed
With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell
There most conspicuous, ev'n in outward shape,
Where dawns the high expression of a mind:
By steps conducting our enraptur'd search
To that eternal origin, whose power,
Through all the' unbounded symmetry of things,
Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
This endless mixture of her charms diffus'd.
Mind, mind alone, (bear witness earth and Heaven!)
The living fountains in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime: here hand in hand,
Sit paramount the Graces; here enthron'd,
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
Invites the soul to never-fading joy.
Look then abroad through nature, to the range

Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
And speak, O man! does this capacious scene
With half that kindling majesty dilate
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,*
Amid the crowd of patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country, hail!
For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free! Is aught so fair
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
Of him who strives with fortune to be just?
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes?
Or the mild majesty of private life,
Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate; where Honour's liberal hands effuse
Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings
Of Innocence and Love protect the scene?
Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound
Where Nature works in secret; view the beds
Of mineral treasure, and the' eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms
Of atoms moving with incessant change
Their elemental round; behold the seeds

* Cicero himself describes this fact—'Cæsare interfecto—statim cruentum alte extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem, nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem est gratulatus.' Cic. Philipp. ii. 12.

Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame:
Then to the secrets of the working mind
Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet, ideal band; and bid them, go!
Break through time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heavens created: then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute, unconscious matter wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts?
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows
The superficial impulse; dull their charms,
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
Not so the moral species, nor the powers
Of genius and design; the' ambitious mind
There sees herself: by these congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
Her features in the mirror. For of all
The' inhabitants of earth, to man alone
Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye
To Truth's eternal measures; thence to frame
The sacred laws of action and of will,
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of Truth, whose dictates bind
Assenting reason, the benignant Sire,
To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
Has added bright Imagination's rays:
Where Virtue, rising from the awful depth
Of Truth's mysterious bosom,* doth forsake

* According to the opinion of those, who assert moral obligation to be founded on an immutable and universal law; and that

The unadorn'd condition of her birth;
And dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues,
Assumes a various feature, to attract,
With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,
The' ingenuous youth, whom Solitude inspires
With purest wishes, from the pensive shade
Beholds her moving, like a virgin-muse
That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
Of harmony and wonder: while among
The herd of servile minds, her strenuous form
Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,
And through the rolls of memory appeals
To ancient honour, or in act serene,
Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
Of public Power, from dark Ambition's reach
To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

Genius of ancient Greece! whose faithful steps
Well-pleas'd I follow, through the sacred paths
Of Nature and of Science; nurse divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!
O! let the breath of thy extended praise
Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
Presumptuous counted, if amid the calm
That soothes this vernal evening into smiles,
I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
Of Strife and low Ambition, to attend
Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.
Descend, propitious! to my favour'd eye;

which is usually called the moral sense, to be determined by the peculiar temper of the imagination and the earliest associations of ideas.

Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne;
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
Thy smiling band of art, thy godlike sires
Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way
Through fair Lycéum's* walk, the green retreats
Of Academus,† and the thymy vale,
Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
Ilissus‡ pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store
Of these auspicious fields, may I unblam'd
Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
My native clime: while far above the flight
Of Fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
The springs of ancient wisdom! while I join
Thy name, thrice honour'd! with the' immortal praise
Of Nature; while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy sons,
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

* The school of Aristotle.

† The school of Plato.

‡ One of the rivers on which Athens was situated. Plato, in some of his finest dialogues, lays the scene of the conversation with Socrates on its banks.

END OF BOOK I.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

The separation of the works of Imagination from Philosophy, the cause of their abuse among the moderns. Prospect of their re-union under the influence of public Liberty. Enumeration of accidental pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination. The pleasures of sense. Particular circumstances of the mind. Discovery of truth. Perception of contrivance and design. Emotion of the passions. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation; with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an allegorical vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror, and indignation.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

n shall the laurel and the vocal string
me their honours? When shall we behold
tuneful tongue, the Promethéan hand
re to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
slow the dawn of beauty and of truth
ks the reluctant shades of gothic night
:h yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
:ath the furies of rapacious force;
s the gloomy north, with iron-swarms
pestuous pouring from her frozen caves,
ed the' Italian shore, and swept the works
iberty and Wisdom down the gulf
l-devouring night. As long immur'd
on-tide darkness by the glimmering lamp,
Muse and each fair Science pin'd away
sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
r mysteries profan'd unstrung the lyre,
chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.

At last the Muses rose,* and spurn'd their bonds,
And, wildly-warbling, scatter'd, as they flew,
Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bowers†
To Arno's‡ myrtle border and the shore
Of soft Parthenopé.§ But still the rage
Of dire ambition and gigantic power,‖
From public aims and from the busy walk
Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train
Of penetrating Science to the cells,
Where studious Ease consumes the silent hour
In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts¶

* About the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence were in high reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire; and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. These were the rudiments of Italian poetry. But their taste and composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; such as Boiardo, Bernardo, Tasso, Ariosto, &c.

† The famous retreat of Francisco Petrarcha, the father of Italian poetry, and his mistress Laura, a lady of Avignon.

‡ The river which runs by Florence, the birth-place of Dante and Boccacio.

§ Or Naples, the birth-place of Sannazaro. The great Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples.

‖ This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of Italy, and abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These at last, in conjunction with the papal power, entirely extinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and established that abuse of the fine arts which has been since propagated over all Europe.

¶ Nor were they only losers by the separation. For Philosophy itself, (to use the words of a noble philosopher) being thus severed by the sprightly arts and sciences, must consequently

Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,
To priestly domination and the lust
Of lawless courts, their amiable toil
For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue
Was turn'd for slavish pæans at the throne
Of tinsel pomp: and Raphael's magic hand
Effus'd its fair creation to enchant
The fond adoring herd, in Latian fanes,
To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks
The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
But now, behold! the radiant era dawns,
When freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
For endless years on Albion's happy shore
In full proportion, once more shall extend
To all the kindred powers of social bliss
A common mansion, a parental roof.
There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,

grow dronish, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world.' Insomuch that 'a gentleman, (says another excellent writer) cannot easily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form: so greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the finest gentleman of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs!' From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of Imagination; and we have had the pleasure of observing a very great progress made towards their union in England within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the Revolution, when Locke stood at the head of one party, and Dryden of the other. But the general spirit of liberty, which has ever since been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of persuasion gave them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable; and philosophy is now of course obliged to borrow of their embellishments, in order even to gain audience with the public.

Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,
Embrace the smiling family of Arts,
The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts
To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,
The patriot-bosom; then no more the paths
Of public care or intellectual toil,
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
In gloomy state be trod: the' harmonious Muse
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
Their sheltering laurels o'er the bleak ascent,
And scatter flowers along the rugged way.
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd
To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats,
And teach the Muse her lore; already strove
Their long-divided honours to unite,
While tempering this deep argument we sang
Of Truth and Beauty. Now the same glad task
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,
We hasten to recount the various springs
Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,
Do they not oft with kind accession flow,
To rise harmonious Fancy's native charm?
So while we taste the fragrance of the rose,
Glows not her blush the fairer? While we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Gush through the trickling herbage, to the thirst
Of summer yielding the delicious draught
Of cool refreshment; o'er the mossy brink
Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
With sweeter music murmur as they flow?

Nor this alone; the various lot of life
Oft from external circumstance assumes
A moment's disposition to rejoice
In those delights which at a different hour
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of Spring,
When rural songs and odours wake the morn,
To every eye; but how much more to his
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd
Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair,
When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain!
Or shall I mention, where celestial Truth
Her awful light discloses, to bestow
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of Truth
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first
The hand of Science pointed out the path
In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil
Involves the orient; and that trickling shower,
Piercing through every crystalline convex
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,
Recoil at length where concave all behind
The' internal surface of each glassy orb
Repels their forward passage into air;
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal
From which their course began; and, as they strike
In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,

Assume a different lustre, through the brede
Of colours changing from the splendid rose
To the pale violet's dejected hue.
  Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,
That springs to each fair object, while we trace,
Through all its fabric, Wisdom's artful aim
Disposing every part, and gaining still
By means proportion'd her benignant end?
Speak ye, the pure delight, whose favour'd steps
The lamp of science through the jealous maze
Of Nature guides, when haply you reveal
Her secret honours; whether in the sky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central powers
That wheel the pensile planets round the year;
Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
Ye scan the counsels of their Author's hand.
  What, when to raise the meditated scene,
The flame of passion, through the struggling soul
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vast of size,
With fiercer colours and a night of shade?
What? like a storm from their capacious bed
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of these eruptions, working from the depth
Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame
Ev'n to the base; from every naked sense
Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil
Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times
To hide the feeling heart? Then Nature speaks
Her genuine language, and the words of men,
Big with the very motion of their souls,

Declare with what accumulated force,
The' impetuous nerve of passion urges on
The native weight and energy of things.
Yet more: her honours where nor beauty claims,
Nor shows of good the thirsty sense allure,
From passion's power alone our nature holds
Essential pleasure.* Passion's fierce illapse
Rouses the mind's whole fabric; with supplies
Of daily impulse keeps the' elastic powers
Intensely pois'd, and polishes anew
By that collision all the fine machine:
Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees
Encumbering, choke at last what Heaven design'd
For ceaseless motion and a round of toil.
—But say, does every passion thus to man
Administer delight? That name indeed
Becomes the rosy breath of love; becomes
The radiant smiles of joy, the' applauding hand
Of admiration: but the bitter shower
That sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave;

* This very mysterious kind of pleasure, which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. Lucretius resolves it into self love:

Suave mari magno, &c. lib. ii. 1.

As if a man was never pleased in being moved at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool reflection that though these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious author of the 'Reflections Critiques sur la Poesie et sur la Peinture,' accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive state: and this, joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which, as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epic, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

But the dumb palsy of nocturnal fear,
Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting indignation, find we there
To move delight?—Then listen while my tongue
The' unalter'd will of Heaven with faithful awe
Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age; Harmodius, who had weigh'd
Within his learned mind what e'er the schools
Of Wisdom, or thy lonely-whispering voice,
O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws
Which govern and support this mighty frame
Of universal being. Oft the hours
From morn to eve have stol'n unmark'd away,
While mute attention hung upon his lips,
As thus the sage his awful tale began:
"'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
When spotless youth with solitude resigns
To sweet philosophy the studious day,
What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve,
Musing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
And much of mortal man my thought revolv'd;
When starting full on Fancy's gushing eye
The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,
That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd!
When blooming youth, nor gentlest wisdom's arts,
Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears
Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave:
Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell,
Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul
As with the hand of Death. At once the shade
More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
With hoarser murmuring shook the branches. Dark
As midnight storms, the scene of human things

Appear'd before me; deserts, burning sands,
Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen south,
And desolation blasting all the west
With rapine and with murder: tyrant-power
Here sits enthron'd with blood; the baleful charms
Of superstition there infect the skies,
And turn the sun to horror. "Gracious Heaven!
What is the life of man? Or cannot these,
Not these portents thy awful will suffice?
That, propagated thus beyond their scope,
They rise to act their cruelties anew
In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed
The universal sensitive of pain,
The wretched heir of evils not its own!"
'Thus I impatient; when, at once effus'd,
A flashing torrent of celestial day
Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent
A purple cloud came floating through the sky,
And pois'd at length within the circling trees,
Hung obvious to my view; till opening wide
Its lucid orb, a more than human form
Emerging lean'd majestic o'er my head,
And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.
Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
And all the shining vision stood reveal'd.
A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,
Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist
Collected with a radiant zone of gold
Ethereal: there in mystic signs engrav'd,
I read his office high and sacred name,
"Genius of human-kind!" Appall'd, I gaz'd
The godlike presence; for athwart his brow
Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,

Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words
Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air:
"Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth!
And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
Capacious of this universal frame?
Thy wisdom all-sufficient? Thou, alas!
Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
Of Nature and his works? to lift thy voice
Against the sovereign order he decreed,
All good and lovely? to blaspheme the bands
Of tenderness innate and social love,
Holiest of things! by which the general orb
Of being, as by adamantine links,
Was drawn to perfect union and sustain'd
From everlasting? Hast thou felt the pangs
Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal
So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
The ties of nature broken from thy frame;
That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart
Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then
The wretched heir of evils not its own?
O fair benevolence of generous minds!
O man by Nature form'd for all mankind!"
'He spoke; abash'd and silent I remain'd,
As conscious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd
Before his presence, though my secret soul
Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground
I fix'd my eyes; till from his airy couch
He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand
My dazzling forehead, "Raise thy sight, (he cried)
And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue."
'I look'd, and lo! the former scene was chang'd;
For verdant alleys and surrounding trees,
A solitary prospect, wide and wild,

Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas an horrid pile
Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd,
With many a sable cliff and glittering stream.
Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge, [springs
The brown woods wav'd; while ever-trickling
Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine
The crumbling soil; and still at every fall
Down the steep windings of the channel'd rock,
Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods
With hoarser inundation; till at last
They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts
Of that high desert spread her verdant lap,
And drank the gushing moisture, where confin'd
In one smooth current, o'er the lilied vale
Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils,
Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,
Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-encircling mound
As in a sylvan theatre inclos'd
That flowery level. On the river's brink
I spied a fair pavilion, which diffus'd
Its floating umbrage mid the silver shade
Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd
Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,
On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light
That cheer'd the solemn scene. My listening powers
Were aw'd, and every thought in silence hung,
And wondering expectation. Then the voice
Of that celestial power, the mystic show
Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd:
'Inhabitant of earth,* to whom is given

* The account of the economy of Providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from

The gracious ways of Providence to learn,
Receive my sayings with a stedfast ear—
Know then, the Sovereign Spirit of the world,
Though, self-collected from eternal time,

the Pythagorean school: but of the ancient philosophers, Plato has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here, though somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine Providence: 'The Being who presides over the whole,' (says he) 'has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is yours, O unhappy man, which, though in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the mean time are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy; existing, as it does, not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole of which it is a part. Your complaint, therefore, is ignorant and groundless; since, according to the various energy of creation, and the common laws of nature, there is a constant provision of that which is best at the same time for you and for the whole. For the governing intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self moving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which diversifies them, considered first of all by what disposition of things, and by what situation of each individual in the general system, vice might be depressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of victory and happiness with the greatest facility, and in the highest degree possible: in this manner he ordered through the entire circle of being, the internal constitution of every mind, where should be its station in the universal fabric, and through what variety of circumstances it should proceed in the whole tenor of its existence.' He goes on in his sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution; 'as well for those who, by the exercise of good

Within his own deep essence he beheld
The bounds of true felicity complete;
Yet by immense benignity inclin'd
To spread around him that primeval joy
Which fill'd himself, he rais'd his plastic arm,
And sounded through the hollow depth of space
The strong, creative mandate. Straight arose
These heavenly orbs, the glad abodes of life
Effusive kindled by his breath divine
Through endless forms of being. Each inhal'd
From him its portion of the vital flame,
In measure such, that, from the wide complex
Of co-existent orders, one might rise,
One order,* all-involving and entire.
He too beholding, in the sacred light
Of his essential reason, all the shapes
Of swift contingence, all successive ties
Of action propagated through the sum
Of possible existence, he at once,
Down the long series of eventful time,
So fix'd the dates of being, so dispos'd

dispositions being harmonized and assimilated into the divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of unblemished sanctity and happiness; as of those who by the most flagitious arts have arisen from contemptible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power, and whom you therefore look upon as unanswerable instances of negligence in the gods, because you are ignorant of the purposes to which they are subservient, and in what manner they contribute to that supreme intention of good to the whole.' Plato de Leg. x. 16.

This theory has been delivered of late, especially abroad, in a manner which subverts the freedom of human actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to preserve it, and has been in that respect imitated by the best of his followers.

* See the Meditations of Antoninus, and the Characteristics, *passim*.

To every living soul of every kind
The field of motion and the hour of rest,
That all conspir'd to his supreme design,
To universal good; with full accord
Answering the mighty model he had chos'n,
The best and fairest* of unnumber'd worlds
That lay from everlasting in the store
Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,
By one exertion of creative power
His goodness to reveal; through every age,
Through every moment up the tract of time,
His parent-hand, with ever-new increase
Of happiness and virtue, has adorn'd
The vast harmonious frame: his parent-hand,
From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,
To men, to angels, to celestial minds,
For ever leads the generations on
To higher scenes of being; while supplied
From day to day with his enlivening breath,
Inferior orders in succession rise
To fill the void below. As flame ascends,†

* This opinion is so old, that Timæus Locrus calls the Supreme Being 'δημιουργος του βελτιονος', the artificer of that which is best;' and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intelligible and essential idea; 'so that it yet remains, as it was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in need of any correction or improvement.' There can be no room for a caution here, to understand the expressions, not of any particular circumstances of human life separately considered, but of the sum of universal system of life and being. See also the vision at the end of the Theodicée of Leibnitz.

† This opinion, though not held by Plato, nor any of the ancients, is yet a very natural consequence of his principles. But the disquisition is too complex and extensive to be entered upon here.

As bodies to their proper centre move,
As the pois'd ocean to the' attracting moon
Obedient swells, and every headlong stream
Devolves its winding waters to the main;
So all things which have life aspire to God,
The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,
Centre of souls! Nor does the faithful voice
Of Nature cease to prompt their eager steps
Aright; nor is the care of Heaven withheld
From granting to the task proportion'd aid;
That in their stations all may persevere
To climb the' ascent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.—
"That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn
Fresh-water'd from the mountains. Let the scene
Paint in thy fancy the primeval seat
Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain'd
His mansion, that pavilion fair diffus'd
Along the shady brink; in this recess
To wear the' appointed season of his youth,
Till riper hours should open to his toil
The high communion of superior minds,
Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget
His tender bloom to cherish: nor withheld
Celestial footsteps from his green abode.
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
He sent whom most he lov'd, the sovereign fair,
The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd
Before his eyes for ever to behold;
The goddess from whose inspiration flows
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends:
Without whose work divine, in heaven or earth,
Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to pass,

Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the Sire
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
The folded powers to open, to direct
The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
And from the laws of this majestic world
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
Her daily care attended, by her side
With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,
The fair Euphrosynè, the gentle queen
Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men
And powers immortal. See the shining pair!
Behold, where from his dwelling now disclos'd
They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies."

'I look'd, and on the flowery turf there stood
Between two radiant forms a smiling youth,
Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flower
Of beauty; sweetest innocence illum'd
His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow
Sate young simplicity. With fond regard
He view'd the' associates, as their steps they mov'd;
The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,
With mild regret invoking her return.
Bright as the star of evening she appear'd
Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth
O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd;
And smiles eternal from her candid eyes
Flow'd, like the dewy lustre of the morn
Effusive trembling on the placid waves.
The Spring of Heaven had shed its blushing spoils
To bind her sable tresses: full diffus'd
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze,
And in her hand she wav'd a living branch
Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm

The wrathful heart, and from the brightening eyes
To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime
The heavenly partner mov'd. The prime of age
Compos'd her steps. The presence of a god,
High on the circle of her brow enthron'd,
From each majestic motion darted awe,
Devoted awe! till, cherish'd by her looks
Benevolent and meek, confiding love
To filial rapture soften'd all the soul.
Free in her graceful hand she pois'd the sword
Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown
Display'd the old simplicity of pomp
Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,
White as the sunshine streams through vernal clouds
Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
The' immortal pair forsook the' enamel'd green,
Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light [heard,
Gleam'd round their path; celestial sounds were
And through the fragrant air ethereal dews
Distill'd around them; till at once the clouds,
Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew
Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse
Of empyréan flame, where spent and drown'd,
Afflicted vision plung'd in vain to scan
What object it involv'd. My feeble eyes
Endur'd not. Bending down to earth I stood,
With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,
As watery murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,
With sacred invocation thus began:
"Father of gods and mortals! whose right arm
With reins eternal guides the moving heavens,
Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well pleas'd
I seek to finish thy divine decree.
With frequent steps I visit yonder seat

Of man, thy offspring: from the tender seeds
Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve
The latent honours of his generous frame;
Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
From earth's dim scene to these ethereal walks,
The temple of thy glory. But not me,
Not my directing voice he oft requires,
Or hears delighted: this enchanting maid,
The' associate thou hast given me, her alone
He loves, O Father! absent, her he craves;
And but for her glad presence ever join'd,
Rejoices not in mine: that all my hopes
This thy benignant purpose to fulfil,
I deem uncertain: and my daily cares
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee
Still further aided in the work divine."

'She ceas'd; a voice more awful thus replied:
"O thou! in whom for ever I delight,
Fairer than all the inhabitants of Heaven,
Best image of thy Author! far from thee
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame;
Who soon or late shalt every work fulfil,
And no resistance find. If man refuse
To hearken to thy dictates; or, allur'd
By meaner joys, to any other power
Transfer the honours due to thee alone
That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,
That power in whom delighteth ne'er behold.
Go then, once more, and happy be thy toil;
Go then! but let not this thy smiling friend
Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold!
With thee the son of Nemesis I send;
The fiend abhorr'd! whose vengeance takes account
Of sacred order's violated laws.

See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,
Control his cruel frenzy, and protect
Thy tender charge; that when despair shall grasp
His agonizing bosom, he may learn,
Then he may learn to love the gracious hand
Alone sufficient, in the hour of ill,
To save his feeble spirit; then confess
Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair!
When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
Of this avenging demon, all the storms
Of night infernal, serve but to display
The energy of thy superior charms
With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,
And shining clearer in the horrid gloom."
'Here ceas'd that awful voice, and soon I felt
The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve
Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire
Sheltering my eye-lids. Looking up, I view'd
A vast gigantic spectre striding on
Through murmuring thunders and a waste of clouds,
With dreadful action. Black as night, his brow
Relentless frowns involv'd. His savage limbs
With sharp impatience violent he writh'd,
As through convulsive anguish; and his hand,
Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he rais'd
In madness to his bosom; while his eyes
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook
The void with horror. Silent by his side
The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd
Her features. From the glooms which hung around,
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop

Upon the river-bank; and now to hail
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanc'd
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.
'As when a famish'd wolf, that all night long
Had rang'd the Alpine snows, by chance at morn
Sees, from a cliff incumbent o'er the smoke
Of some lone village, a neglected kid
That strays along the wild for herb or spring;
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,
And thinks he tears him: so with tenfold rage,
The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.
Amaz'd the stripling stood: with panting breast
Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
Of helpless consternation, struck at once,
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld
His terror, and with looks of tenderest care
Advanc'd to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
Her awful power. His keen tempestuous arm
Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
Had aim'd the deadly blow: then dumb retir'd
With sullen rancour. Lo! the sovereign maid
Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,
Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek; [tongue:
Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her
"O wake thee, rouse thy spirit! Shall the spite
Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,
While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
To rescue and to heal? O let thy soul
Remember, what the will of Heaven ordains
Is ever good for all; and if for all,
Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled
By that bland light the young unpractis'd views

Of reason wander, through a fatal road,
Far from their native aim: as if to lie
Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
The soft access of ever-circling joys,
Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,
This pleasing error did it never lull
Thy wishes? Has thy constant heart refus'd
The silken fetters of delicious ease?
Or when divine Euphrosyné appear'd
Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
Hang far below the measure of thy fate,
Which I reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes,
Impatient of my counsels, turn away
To drink the soft effusion of her smiles?
Know then, for this the everlasting Sire
Deprives thee of her presence; and instead,
O wise and still benevolent! ordains
This horrid visage hither to pursue
My steps; that so thy nature may discern
Its real good, and what alone can save
Thy feeble spirit, in this hour of ill,
From folly and despair. O yet belov'd!
Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
Thy scatter'd powers; nor fatal deem the rage
Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
While I am here to vindicate thy toil,
Above the generous question of thy arm.
Brave by thy fears, and in thy weakness strong,
This hour he triumphs: but confront his might,
And dare him to the combat, then with ease
Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns
To bondage and to scorn: while thus inur'd
By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,
The' immortal mind, superior to his fate,

Amid the outrage of external things,
Firm as the solid base of this great world,
Rests on his own foundation. Blow, ye winds!
Ye waves! ye thunders! roll your tempest on;
Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky!
Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
Be loosen'd from their seats; yet still serene,
The' unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck;
And ever stronger as the storms advance,
Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,
Where nature calls him to the destin'd goal."
'So spake the goddess; while through all her frame,
Celestial raptures flow'd in every word,
In every motion kindling warmth divine
To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift
As lightning fires the aromatic shade
In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt
Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
And starting from his languor, thus exclaim'd:
"Then let the trial come! and witness thou,
If terror be upon me; if I shrink
To meet the storm, or falter in my strength
When hardest it besets me. Do not think
That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
As late thy eyes beheld: for thou hast chang'd
My nature; thy commanding voice has wak'd
My languid powers to bear me boldly on,
Where'er the will divine my path ordains
Through toil or peril: only do not thou
Forsake me; O be thou for ever near,
That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
And guide by thy decrees my constant feet.
But say, for ever are my eyes bereft?
Say, shall the fair Euphrosyné not once

Appear again to charm me? Thou, in Heaven,
O thou eternal arbiter of things!
Be thy great bidding done: for who am I,
To question thy appointment? Let the frowns
Of this avenger every morn o'ercast
The cheerful dawn, and every evening damp
With double night my dwelling; I will learn
To hail them both, and unrepining bear
His hateful presence: but permit my tongue
One glad request, and if my deeds may find
Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
The rosy-featur'd maid; again to cheer
This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles."
'He spoke; when instant through the sable glooms
With which that furious presence had involv'd
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
Swift as the lightning flash; the melting clouds
Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene
Euphrosyné appear'd. With sprightly step
The nymph alighted on the' irriguous lawn,
And to her wondering audience thus began:
"Lo! I am here to answer to your vows,
And be the meeting fortunate! I come
With joyful tidings: we shall part no more—
Hark! how the gentle echo from her cell [stream
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the
Repeats the accents: we shall part no more.—
O my delightful friends! well pleas'd on high
The Father has beheld you, while the might
Of that stern foe with bitter trial prov'd
Your equal doings; then for ever spake
The high decree: that thou, celestial maid!
Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps
May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more

Shalt thou, descending to the' abode of man,
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
Or leave thy lov'd Euphrosyné behind."
'She ended; and the whole romantic scene
Immediate vanish'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,
The mantling tent, and each mysterious form
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,
When sun-shine fills the bed. Awhile I stood
Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant power
Who bade the visionary landscape rise,
As up to him I turn'd with gentlest looks,
Preventing my inquiry, thus began:
"There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint
How blind, how impious! There behold the ways
Of Heaven's eternal destiny to man,
For ever just, benevolent, and wise;
That Virtue's awful steps, howe'er pursued
By vexing fortune and intrusive pain,
Should never be divided from her chaste,
Her fair attendant, Pleasure. Need I urge
Thy tardy thought through all the various round
Of this existence. That thy softening soul
At length may learn what energy the hand
Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide
Of passion swelling with distress and pain,
To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops
Of cordial pleasure? Ask the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd
So oftens fills his arms; so often draws
His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
O! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
That sacred hour, when, stealing from the noise

Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes
With virtue's kindest looks his aching breast,
And turns his tears to rapture.—Ask the crowd
Which flies impatient from the village-walk
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
Some helpless bark; while sacred Pity melts
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair;
While every mother closer to her breast
Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,
As now another, dash'd against the rock,
Drops lifeless down: O! deemest thou indeed
No kind endearment here by Nature given
To mutual terror and compassion's tears?
No sweetly-melting softness which attracts,
O'er all that edge of pain, the social powers
To this their proper action and their end?
—Ask thy own heart; when at the midnight hour
Slow through that studious gloom thy pausing eye,
Led by the glimmering taper, moves around
The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
For Grecian heroes, where the present power
Of heaven and earth surveys the' immortal page,
Even as a father blessing, while he reads
The praises of his son. If then thy soul,
Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
Mix in their deeds, and kindle with their flame;
Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,

When rooted from the base, heroic states
Mourn in the dust, and tremble at the frown
Of curs'd ambition; when the pious band
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires,
Lie side by side in gore; when ruffian-pride
Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
Of public power, the majesty of rule,
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
To slavish empty pageants, to adorn
A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
Of such as bow the knee; when honour'd urns
Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust
And storied arch, to glut the coward-rage
Of regal envy, strew the public way
With hallow'd ruins; when the Muse's haunt,
The marble porch where Wisdom, wont to talk
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more,
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
Or female Superstition's midnight prayer;
When ruthless Rapine from the hand of Time
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow
To sweep the works of glory from their base;
Till Desolation o'er the grass-grown street
Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,
Where senates once the price of monarchs doom'd,
Hisses the gliding snake through hoary weeds
That clasp the mouldering column; thus defac'd,
Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills
Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's* brow,

* The Macedonian.

Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste
The big distress? Or would'st thou then exchange
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
And says within himself, 'I am a king;
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
Intrude upon mine ear?'—The baleful dregs
Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
(Bless'd be the' eternal Ruler of the world!)
Defil'd to such a depth of sordid shame
The native honours of the human soul,
Nor so effac'd the image of its Sire."

END OF BOOK II.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

Pleasure in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd. The origin of Vice, from false representations of the fancy, producing false opinions concerning good and evil Inquiry into Ridicule. The general sources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men, enumerated. Final cause of the sense of ridicule. The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of Imagination, described. The secondary pleasure from Imitation. The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connection of these pleasures with the objects which excite them. The nature and conduct of Taste. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages resulting from a sensible and well-formed imagination.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

What wonder therefore, since the' endearing ties
Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close; what wonder, if to search
This common nature through the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind
With unresisted charms? The spacious west,
And all the teeming regions of the south,
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight
Of knowledge, half so tempting or so fair,
As man to man. Nor only where the smiles
Of Love invite; nor only where the' applause
Of cordial Honour turns the' attentive eye
On virtue's graceful deeds. For since the course
Of things external acts in different ways
On human apprehensions, as the hand

Of Nature temper'd to a different frame
Peculiar minds; so haply where the powers
Of Fancy* neither lessen nor enlarge

* The influence of the Imagination on the conduct of life, is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to prove that the Imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and soberest industry, analyze the idea of what he calls his interest; he will find that it consists chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variously combined into one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and self-denial. It is, on this account, of the last consequence to regulate these images by the standard of Nature and the general good; otherwise the Imagination, by heightening some objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may of course engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things supposes the passions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in some a natural and hereditary disposition to certain passions prior to all circumstances of education or fortune; it may be answered, that though no man is born ambitious or a miser, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind, which shall render his Imagination more liable to be struck with some particular objects, consequently dispose him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain passions of a particular turn. Some men, for instance, by the original frame of their minds, are more delighted with the vast and magnificent, others on the contrary with the elegant and gentle aspects of nature. And it is very remarkable, that the disposition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the Imagination; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world, are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral, while those who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestic life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers, though we have several hints concerning this influence of the Imagination upon morals among

The images of things, but paint in all
Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
In Nature; there opinion will be true,
And action right. For action treads the path
In which Opinion says he follows good,
Or flies from evil; and Opinion gives
Report of good or evil, as the scene
Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd:
Thus her report can never there be true
Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye,
With glaring colours and distorted lines.
Is there a man, who at the sound of death
Sees ghastly shapes of terrors conjur'd up,
And black before him; nought but death-bed groans
And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink
Of light and being, down the gloomy air,
An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind,
If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country; nor the pomp
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;

the remains of the Socratic school, yet the Stoics were the first who paid it a due attention. Zeno, their founder, thought it impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life, without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things, which the imagination offers to the mind: (Diog. Laert. l. vii.) The meditations of M. Aurelius, and the discourses of Epictetus, are full of the same sentiment; insomuch that the latter makes the Χρησις οἱα δει, φαντασιων, or right management of the fancies, the only thing for which we are accountable to Providence, and without which, a man is no other than stupid or frantic. Arrian. l. i. c. 12. and l. ii. c. 22. See also the Characteristics, vol. i. from p. 313 to 321. where this Stoical doctrine is embellished with all the elegance and graces of Plato.

Will not Opinion tell him, that to die,
Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill
Than to betray his country? And in act
Will he not choose to be a wretch and live?
Here vice begins then. From the' enchanting cup
Which Fancy holds to all, the' unwary thirst
Of youth swallows a Circæan draught,
That sheds a baneful tincture o'er the eye
Of Reason, till no longer he discerns,
And only guides to err. Then revel forth
A furious band that spurn him from the throne;
And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
The empire of the soul: thus pale Revenge
Unsheaths her murderous dagger; and the hands
Of Lust and Rapine, with unholy arts,
Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
The Tragic Muse discloses, under shapes
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease or pomp,
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
Engenders, are the kindling passions driven
To guilty deeds; nor Reason bound in chains,
That Vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd
With solemn pageants, Folly mounts the throne,
And plays her idiot-antics, like a queen.
A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways
She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far
With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre
I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well-pleas'd
A stricter note; now haply must my song
Unbend her serious measure, and reveal

In lighter strains, how Folly's awkward arts*
Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke;
The sportive province of the comic Muse.
  See! in what crowds the uncouth forms advance:
Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
Our careful search, and offer to your gaze,
Unask'd, his motley features. Wait awhile,
My curious friends! and let us first arrange
In proper order your promiscuous throng.
  Behold the foremost band;† of slender thought,
And easy faith; whom flattering Fancy soothes
With lying spectres, in themselves to view
Illustrious forms of excellence and good,
That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,
And bid the world admire! but chief the glance
Of wishful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.
In number boundless as the blooms of Spring,
Behold their glaring idols, empty shades
By fancy gilded o'er, and then set up
For adoration. Some in Learning's garb,
With formal band, and sable-tinctur'd gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate

* Notwithstanding the general influence of Ridicule on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature, should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy; from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus discovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

† The first and most general source of ridicule in the characters of men, is vanity, or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

With martial splendour, steely pikes and swords
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes
Inwrought with flowery gold, assume the port
Of stately valour: listening by his side
There stands a female form; to her, with looks
Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms,
And sulphurous mines, and ambush: then at once
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
And asks some wondering question of her fears?
Others of graver mien, behold, adorn'd
With holy ensigns, how sublime they move,
And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes,
Take homage of the simple-minded throng;
Ambassadors of Heaven! Nor much unlike
Is he whose visage, in the lazy mist
That mantles every feature, hides a brood
Of politic conceits: of whispers, nods,
And hints deep-omen'd with unwieldy schemes,
And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more,
Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,
Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band.
Then comes the second order;* all who seek
The debt of praise, where watchful Unbelief
Darts through the thin pretence her squinting eye
On some retir'd appearance which belies
The boasted virtue, or annuls the' applause
That Justice else would pay. Here side by side
I see two leaders of the solemn train

* Ridicule from the same vanity, where, though the possession be real, yet no merit can arise from it, because of some particular circumstances, which, though obvious to the spectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

Approaching: one a female old and grey,
With eyes demure, and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
Pale as the cheeks of death; yet still she stuns
The sickening audience with a nauseous tale;
How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,
How many virgins at her triumph pin'd!
Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart;
Such is her terror at the risks of love,
And man's seducing tongue! The other seems
A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
And sordid all his habit; peevish Want
Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
He stalks, resounding in magnific praise
The vanity of riches, the contempt
Of pomp and power. Be prudent in your zeal,
Ye grave associates! let the silent grace
Of her who blushes at the fond regard
Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold
The praise of spotless honour: let the man
Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
And ample store, but as indulgent streams
To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits
Of joy, let him by juster measures fix
The price of riches and the end of power.
  Another tribe succeeds;* deluded long
By Fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
The images of some peculiar things
With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart
Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms;

* Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects disproportioned to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature.

Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of Scorn,
Untimely Zeal her witless pride betrays!
And serious Manhood from the towering aim
Of Wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast
Of childish Toil. Behold yon mystic form,
Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds, and shells!
Not with intenser view the Samian sage
Bent his fix'd eye on Heaven's intenser fires,
When first the order of that radiant scene
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys
A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
Next him a youth, with flowers and myrtles crown'd,
Attends that virgin-form, and blushing kneels,
With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,
The dull engagements of the bustling world!
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise!
And hope, and action! for with her alone,
By streams and shades, to steal these sighing hours,
Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!
Thee too, facetious Momion, wandering here,
Thee, dreaded censor, oft have I beheld
Bewilder'd unawares: alas! too long
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs, and the spoils
Of sly derision! till on every side
Hurling thy random bolts, offended Truth
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves
Of Folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In scoffs and mockery bandied from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft the patient victims of thy scorn.
  But now, ye gay! to whom indulgent fate,
Of all the Muse's empire hath assign'd

The fields of folly,* hither each advance
Your sickles; here the teaming soil affords
Its richest growth. A favourite brood appears:
In whom the the demon, with a mother's joy,
Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
At full repay'd. Ye most illustrious band!
Who, scorning Reason's tame, pedantic rules,
And Order's vulgar bondage, (never meant
For souls sublime as yours) with generous zeal
Pay Vice the reverence Virtue long usurp'd,
And yield Deformity the fond applause
Which Beauty wont to claim; forgive my song,
That for the blushing diffidence of youth,
It shuns the' unequal province of your praise.
Thus far triumphant† in the pleasing guile
Of bland Imagination, Folly's train
Have dar'd our search: but now a dastard-kind
Advance reluctant, and with faltering feet
Shrink from the gazer's eye: enfeebled hearts
Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,
Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave
Who droops abash'd when sullen Pomp surveys
His humbler habit; here the trembling wretch
Unnerv'd and struck with Terror's icy bolts,
Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
At every dream of danger: here subdued
By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn

* Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous, as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

† Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

Of old unfeeling vice, the abject soul,
Who blushing half resigns the candid praise
Of Temperance and Honour; half disowns
A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride;
And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth,
With foulest license mock the patriot's name.
Last of the motley bands* on whom the power
Of gay Derision bends her hostile aim,
Is that where shameful Ignorance presides.
Beneath her sordid banners, lo! they march, [hands
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful
Attempt, Confusion straight appears behind,
And troubles all the work. Through many a maze,
Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path,
O'erturning every purpose; then at last
Sit down dismay'd, and leave the' entangled scene
For Scorn to sport with. Such then is the' abode
Of Folly in the mind; and such the shapes
In which she governs her obsequious train.
Through every scene of ridicule in things
To lead the tenor of my devious lay;
Through every swift occasion, which the hand
Of laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
Distends her sallying nerves and chokes her tongue:
What were it but to count each crystal drop
Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
Of May distil? Suffice it to have said,†

* Ridicule from the ignorance of such things as our circumstances require us to know.

† By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to; but others more minute we shall subjoin

Where'er the power of Ridicule displays
Her quaint-ev'd visage, some incongruous form,
Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd,

here. Aristotle's account of the matter seems both imperfect and false; τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, says he, ἐστὶν ἁμάρτημά τι καὶ αἶσχος, ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν: 'the ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to his subject.' (Poet. c. 5.) For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not distinguish the thing designed. Nay further: even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent, and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds. For the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas; but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception. So that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is not engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous, to which others cannot endure to apply the name; because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling. And this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

That which makes objects ridiculous, is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful: the inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate; belonging always to the same order or class of being; implying sentiment or design; and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.

To prove the several parts of this definition: the appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively sordid or deformed, is ridiculous: for instance, pompous pretensions of wisdom joined with ignorance or folly in the Socrates of Aristophanes; and the ostentations of military glory with cowardice and stupidity in the Thraso of Terence.

Strikes on the quick observer: whether Pomp,
Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul Deformity are wont to dwell;
Or whether these with violation loath'd,
Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty, or the boast of Praise.
Ask we for what fair end,* the' Almighty Sire

The appearance of deformity or turpitude, in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable, is also ridiculous: for instance, the personal weaknesses of a magistrate appearing in the solemn and public functions of his station

The incongruous properties may either exist in the objects themselves, or in apprehension of the person to whom they relate: in the last-mentioned instance, they both exist in the objects; in the instances from Aristophanes and Terence, one of them is objective and real, the other is only founded in the apprehension of the ridiculous character.

The inconsistent properties must belong to the same order or class of being. A coxcomb in fine clothes, bedaubed by accident in foul weather, is a ridiculous object; because his general apprehension of excellence and esteem is referred to the splendour and expense of his dress. A man of sense and merit, in the same circumstances, is not counted ridiculous; because the general ground of excellence and esteem in him is, both in fact and in his own apprehension, of a very different species.

Every ridiculous object implies sentiment or design. A column placed by an architect without a capital or base, is laughed at: the same column in a ruin causes a very different sensation.

And lastly, the occurrence must excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart, such as terror, pity, or indignation; for in that case, as was observed above, the mind is not at leisure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this description, and whether it comprehend every species and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

* Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a natural sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a

In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt,
These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
The giddy aims of Folly? Though the light
Of Truth slow-dawning on the' inquiring mind,
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil! yet benignant Heaven,
Conscious how dim the dawn of Truth appears

reason may be assigned to justify the Supreme Being for bestowing it; one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with mere speculative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are relative, implying approbation or blame. To ask them whether 'Ridicule be a test of truth,' is in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous A question that does not deserve a serious answer. For it is most evident, that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea, which was supposed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood; so, in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause, the faculty of ridicule, finding an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public; it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and, by setting them in full view, to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the moral falsehood sooner than in the way of speculative inquiry, and impress the minds

To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause
From labours and from care, the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of Nature; therefore stamp'd
The glaring scenes with characters of scorn,
As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind—
Some heavenly genius, whose unclouded thoughts
Attain that secret harmony which blends
The' ethereal spirit with its mould of clay;
O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man

of men with a stronger sense of the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous; men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us: but the sense of ridicule always judges right. The Socrates of Aristophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn:—True; but it is not the character of Socrates, the divine moralist and father of ancient wisdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced into his character, and thus rendered the satirist doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of Spinoza made many atheists: he has founded it indeed on suppositions utterly false: but allow him these, and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because, by the imposition of false circumstances, things may be made to seem ridiculous, which are not so in themselves; why we ought not in the same manner to reject the use of reason, because, by proceeding on false principles, conclusions will appear true, which are impossible in nature, let the vehement and obstinate declaimers against ridicule determine.

Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,
The inexpressive semblance of himself,*
Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods
That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;
With what religious awe the solemn scene
Commands your steps! as if the reverend form
Of Minos or of Numa should forsake
The' Elysian seats, and down the' embowering glade
Move to your pausing eye! Behold the' expanse
Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds
Flit o'er the heavens before the sprightly breeze:
Now their grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun;
Now streams of splendour, through their opening veil
Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn
The aërial shadows; on the curling brook,
And on the shady margin's quivering leaves
With quickset lustre glancing: while you view
The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast
Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth
With clouds and sunshine chequer'd, while the round
Of social converse, to the' inspiring tongue
Of some gay nymph amid her subject-train,
Moves all obsequious? Whence is this effect,
This kindred power of such discordant things?
Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone
To which the new-born mind's harmonious powers
At first were strung? Or rather from the links
Which artful custom twines around her frame?
For when the different images of things,
By chance combin'd, have struck the' attentive soul
With deeper impulse, or connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct

* This similitude is the foundation of almost all the ornaments of poetic diction.

The' external scenes, yet oft the' ideas gain
From that conjunction an eternal tie,
And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
Recal one partner of the various league,
Immediate, lo! the firm confederates rise,
And each his former station straight resumes:
One movement governs the consenting throng,
And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,
Two faithful needles,* from the' informing touch
Of the same parent-stone, together drew
Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd
With fatal impulse quivering to the pole:
Then, though disjoin'd by kingdoms, though the main
Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and different stars
Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserv'd
The former friendship, and remember'd still
The alliance of their birth: whate'er the line
Which one possess'd, nor pause nor quiet knew
The sure associate, ere with trembling speed
He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
Such is the secret union, when we feel
A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
Those long-connected scenes where first they mov'd
The' attention: backward through her mazy walks
Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
To temples, courts or fields; with all the band
Of painted forms, of passions and designs
Attendant: whence, if pleasing in itself,
The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.

* See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of Lucretius; *Strada Prolus.* vi. *Academ.* 2. c. v.

By these mysterious ties,* the busy power
Of Memory her ideal train preserves
Entire; or when they would elude her watch,
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to present,
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largest choice: like Spring's unfolded blooms,
Exhaling sweetness, that the skillful bee
May taste at will, from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food. For not the' expanse
Of living lakes in Summer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bordering shade, and sun-bright heav'ns
With fairer semblance; not the sculptur'd gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whose birth the sister-powers of art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind;
Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve
The seal of Nature. There alone unchang'd,
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets, the trembling chord
Resounds for ever in the' abstracted ear,
Melodious: and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,
Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length
Endow'd with all that nature can bestow,
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends
O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast,
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what sublime reward

* The act of remembering seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.

Of praise and wonder. By degrees the mind
Feels her young nerves dilate: the plastic powers
Labour for action: blind emotions heave
His bosom; and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come: the' eternal heavens
Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the rising phantoms. Now compares
Their different forms; now blends them, now di-
Enlarges and extenuates by turns; [vides,
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies. Hither now,
Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;
And as from chaos old the jarring seeds
Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd
Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees
Thus disentangled, his entire design
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,
And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;
The fairer eminent in light advance;
And every image on its neighbour smiles.
Awhile he stands, and with a father's joy
Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art,
Into its proper vehicle* he breathes

* This relates to the different sorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artists are rendered palpable to the senses:

The fair conception; which, embodied thus,
And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
An object ascertain'd: while thus inform'd,
The various organs of his mimic skill,
The consonance of sounds, the featur'd rock,
The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
Beyond their proper powers attract the soul
By that expressive semblance, while in sight
Of Nature's great original we scan
The lively child of Art; while line by line,
And feature after feature we refer
To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
Those animating charms. Thus Beauty's palm
Betwixt them wavering hangs: applauding Love
Doubts where to choose; and mortal man aspires
To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
Of gathering hail, with limpid crusts of ice
Enclos'd and obvious to the beaming sun,
Collects his large effulgence; straight the heavens
With equal flames present on either hand
The radiant visage; Persia stands at gaze,
Appall'd; and on the brink of Ganges doubts
The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,
To which the fragrance of the south shall burn,
To which his warbled orisons ascend.
Such various bliss the well-tun'd heart enjoys,
Favour'd of Heaven! while plung'd in sordid cares,
The' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine:
And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke
Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away
Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,

as by sounds, in music; by lines and shadows, in painting; by diction, in poetry, &c.

Perhaps even now, some cold fastidious judge
Casts a disdainful eye; and calls my toil,
And calls the love and beauty which I sing,
The dream of Folly. Thou, grave censor! say,
Is beauty then a dream, because the glooms
Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense,
To let her shine upon thee? So the man
Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of Heaven,
Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells
Of the gay-colour'd radiance flushing bright
O'er all creation. From the wise be far
Such gross unhallow'd pride; nor needs my song
Descend so low; but rather now unfold,
If human thought could reach, or words unfold,
By what mysterious fabric of the mind,
The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound
Result from airy motion; and from shape
The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.
By what fine ties hath God connected things
When present in the mind, which in themselves
Have no connection! Sure the rising sun
O'er the cerulean convex of the sea,
With equal brightness and with equal warmth
Might roll his fiery orb; nor yet the soul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers
Exulting in the splendour she beholds;
Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp
Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,
Soft murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear
Through all its tones the sympathy pursue;
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal through his veins and fan the' awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song.

But were not Nature still endow'd at large
With all which life requires, though unadorn'd
With such enchantment? Wherefore then her form
So exquisitely fair? her breath perfum'd
With such ethereal sweetness? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress [light
The' impassion'd soul? and whence the robes of
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp
Than fancy can describe? Whence but from Thee,
O source divine of ever-flowing love,
And thy unmeasur'd goodness? Not content
With every food of life to nourish man,
By kind illusions of the wondering sense
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye,
Or music to his ear: well pleased he scans
The goodly prospect; and with inward smiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain;
Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,
And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal splendour; bends his ears
To the full chóir of water, air, and earth;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought,
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds,
Than space, or motion, or eternal time;
So sweet he feels their influence to attract
The fixed soul; to brighten the dull glooms
Of care, and make the destin'd road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
The' adventurous hero, bound on hard exploits,
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils,
A visionary paradise disclos'd
Amid the dubious wild: with streams, and shades,

And airy songs, the' enchanted landscape smiles,
Cheers his long labours, and renews his frame.
What then is taste, but these internal powers,
Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse? a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, or gross
In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow;
But God alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.
He, mighty Parent! wise and just in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heaven,
Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain
Who journeys homeward from a summer day's
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
And due repose, he loiters to behold
The sunshine gleaming as through amber clouds,
O'er all the western sky: full soon, I ween,
His rude expression and untutor'd airs,
Beyond the power of language, will unfold
The form of beauty smiling at his heart,
How lovely! how commanding! But though Heaven
In every breast hath sown these early seeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
Without enlivening suns, and genial showers,
And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope
The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
Or yield the harvest promis'd in its Spring.
Nor yet will every soil with equal stores
Repay the tiller's labour; or attend
His will, obsequious, whether to produce
The olive or the laurel. Different minds
Incline to different objects: one pursues

The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild;*
Another sighs for harmony, and grace,
And glentest beauty. Hence when lightning fires
The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,
Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky;
Amid the mighty uproar, while below
The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad
From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys
The elemental war. But Waller longs,†
All on the margin of some flowery stream,
To spread his careless limbs amid the cool
Of plantane shades, and to the listening deer
The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain
Resound soft-warbling all the live-long day:
Consenting Zephyr sighs; the weeping rill
Joins in his plaint, melodious; mute the groves;
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
Such and so various are the tastes of men.
Oh! bless'd of Heaven, whom not the languid songs
Of luxury, the siren! not the bribes
Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils
Of pageant honour can seduce to leave
Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store
Of nature fair Imagination culls

* See the first note of this book.

† 'O! how I long my careless limbs to lay
Under the plantane shade: and all the day
With amorous airs my fancy entertain,' &c.
Waller, Battle of the Summer Islands, Canto I.

And again,
'While in the park I sing, the listening deer
Attend my passion, and forget to fear,' &c.
At Penshurst.

To charm the' enliven'd soul! What though not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envied life; though only few possess
Patrician treasures or imperial state;
Yet Nature's care, to all her children just
With richer treasures and an ampler state,
Endows at large whatever happy man
Will deign to use them. His the'city's pomp,
The rural honours his. Whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marble and the sculptur'd gold,
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim,
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him, the Spring
Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him, the hand
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold and blushes like the morn.
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings;
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shade
Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasure, unreprov'd.* Nor thence partakes

* That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this head; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal nature he observes, that 'there is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive, when once we consider *its connection* with that general order.' He instances in many

Fresh pleasure only: for the' attentive mind,
By this harmonious action on her powers
Becomes herself harmonious: wont so oft
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
To find a kindred order, to exert
Within herself this elegance of love,
This fair inspir'd delight: her temper'd powers
Refine at length, and every passion wears
A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.
But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze
On Nature's form, where, negligent of all
These lesser graces, she assumes the port
Of that Eternal Majesty that weigh'd
The world's foundations, if to these the mind
Exalts her daring eye; then mightier far
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms
Of servile custom cramp her generous powers?
Would sordid policies, the barbarous growth
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down
To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear?
Lo! she appeals to nature, to the winds
And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,
The elements and seasons: all declare
For what the' Eternal Maker has ordain'd
The powers of man: we feel within ourselves
His energy divine: he tells the heart,
He meant, he made us to behold and love

things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities; and then adds, 'that a man who enjoys a sensibility of temper with a just comprehension of the universal order—will discern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with Nature and her works.'—M. Antonin. iii. 2.

What he beholds and loves, the general orb
Of life and being; to be great like him,
Beneficent and active Thus the men
Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself
Hold converse; grow familiar, day by day,
With his conceptions; act upon his plan;
And form to his, the relish of their souls.

END OF BOOK III.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION,

ON AN ENLARGED PLAN.

GENERAL ARGUMENT.

The Pleasures of the Imagination proceed either from natural objects, as from a flourishing grove, a clear and murmuring fountain, a calm sea by moonlight; or from works of art, such as a noble edifice, a musical tune, a statue, a picture, a poem. In treating of these pleasures, we must begin with the former class; they being original to the other: and nothing more being necessary, in order to explain them, than a view of our natural inclination toward greatness and beauty, and of those appearances, in the world around us, to which that inclination is adapted. This is the subject of the first book of the following poem.

But the pleasures which we receive from the elegant arts, from music, sculpture, painting, and poetry, are much more various and complicated. In them (besides greatness and beauty, or forms proper to the imagination) we find interwoven frequent representations of truth, of virtue and vice, of circumstances proper to move us with laughter, or to excite in us pity, fear, and the other passions. These moral and intellectual objects are described in the second book; to which the third properly belongs as an episode, though too large to have been included in it.

With the above-mentioned causes of pleasure, which are universal in the course of human life, and

appertain to our higher faculties, many others do generally concur, more limited in their operation, or of an inferior origin: such are the novelty of objects, the association of ideas, affections of the bodily senses, influences of education, national habits, and the like. To illustrate these, and from the whole to determine the character of a perfect taste, is the argument of the fourth book.

Hitherto the Pleasures of the Imagination belong to the human species in general. But there are certain particular men whose imagination is endowed with powers, and susceptible of pleasures, which the generality of mankind never participate. These are the men of genius, destined by nature to excel in one or other of the arts already mentioned. It is proposed, therefore, in the last place, to delineate that genius which in some degree appears common to them all; yet with a more peculiar consideration of poetry: inasmuch as poetry is the most extensive of those arts, the most philosophical, and the most useful.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE FIRST.

1757.

ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Dedication. The ideas of the Supreme Being, the exemplars of all things. The variety of constitution in the minds of men; with its final cause. The general character of a fine Imagination. All the immediate pleasures of the human Imagination proceed either from Greatness or Beauty in external objects. The pleasure from Greatness; with its final cause. The natural connection of Beauty with truth* and good. The different orders of Beauty in different objects. The infinite and all-comprehending form of Beauty, which belongs to the Divine Mind. The partial and artificial forms of Beauty, which belong to inferior intellectual beings. The origin and general conduct of beauty in man. The subordination of local beauties to the beauty of the Universe. Conclusion.

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* Truth is here taken, not in a logical, but in a mixed and popular sense, or for what has been called the truth of things; denoting as well their natural and regular condition, as a proper estimate or judgment concerning them.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK I.

: what enchantment Nature's goodly scene
:ts the sense of mortals; how the mind
s own eye doth objects nobler still
ıre; how men by various lessons learn
dge of Beauty's praise; what raptures fill
ɔreast with fancy's native arts endow'd,
vhat true culture guides it to renown;
:rse unfolds. Ye gods, or godlike powers,
ardians of the sacred task, attend
:ious. Hand in hand around your bard
in majestic measures, leading on
ɔubtful step through many a solemn path,
ious of secrets which to human sight
ly can reveal. Be great in him:
:t your favour make him wise to speak
your wondrous empire; with a voice
nper'd to his theme, that those, who hear,
ield perpetual homage to yourselves.
chief, O daughter of eternal Love,
:'er thy name; or Muse, or Grace, ador'd

By Grecian prophets; to the sons of Heaven
Known, while with deep amazement thou dost there
The perfect counsels read, the' ideas old,
Of thine omniscient Father; known on earth
By the still horror and the blissful tear
With which thou seizest on the soul of man;
Thou chief, poetic spirit, from the banks
Of Avon, whence thy holy fingers cull
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakspeare lies, be present. And with thee
Let Fiction come; on her aërial wings
Wafting ten thousand colours; which in sport,
By the light glances of her magic eye,
She bends and shifts at will through countless forms,
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,
Whose awful tones control the moving sphere,
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony, descend,
And join this happy train? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their mystic rites,
Wise Order: and, where order deigns to come,
Her sister, Liberty, will not be far.
Be present all ye Genii, who conduct
Of youthful bards the lonely-wandering step [ear
New to your springs and shades; who touch their
With finer sounds, and heighten to their eye
The pomp of nature, and before them place
The fairest, loftiest countenance of things.
  Nor thou, my Dyson, to the lay refuse
Thy wonted partial audience. What, though first
In years unseason'd, haply ere the sports
Of childhood yet were o'er, the' adventurous lay
With many splendid prospects, many charms,
Allur'd my heart, nor conscious whence they sprung,
Nor heedful of their end? yet serious Truth

Her empire o'er the calm, sequester'd theme
Asserted soon; while Falsehood's evil brood,
Vice and deceitful Pleasure, she at once
Excluded, and my fancy's careless toil
Drew to the better cause. Maturer aid
Thy friendship added, in the paths of life,
The busy paths, my unaccustom'd feet
Preserving: nor to truth's recess divine,
Through this wide argument's unbeaten space,
Withholding surer guidance; while by turns
We trac'd the sages old, or while the queen
Of sciences (whom manners and the mind
Acknowledge) to my true companion's voice
Not unattentive, o'er the wintry lamp
Inclin'd her sceptre, favouring. Now the fates
Have other tasks impos'd:—to thee, my friend,
The ministry of freedom and the faith
Of popular decrees, in early youth,
Not vainly they committed: me they sent
To wait on pain; and silent arts to urge,
Inglorious: not ignoble; if my cares,
To such as languish on a grievous bed,
Ease and the sweet forgetfulness of ill
Conciliate: nor delightless; if the Muse,
Her shades to visit and to taste her springs,
If some distinguish'd hours the bounteous Muse
Impart, and grant (what she, and she alone
Can grant to mortals) that my hand those wreaths
Of fame and honest favour, which the bless'd
Wear in Elysium, and which never felt
The breath of envy or malignant tongues,
That these my hand for thee and for myself
May gather. Meanwhile, O my faithful friend,
O early chosen, ever found the same,

And trusted and belov'd; once more the verse
Long destin'd, always obvious to thine ear,
Attend, indulgent: so in latest years,
When time thy head with honours shall have cloth'd
Sacred to even virtue, may thy mind,
Amid the calm review of seasons past,
Fair offices of friendship or kind peace
Or public zeal, may then thy mind well-pleas'd
Recal these happy studies of our prime. [descends
From Heaven my strains begin: from Heaven
The flame of genius to the chosen breast,
And beauty with poetic wonder join'd,
And inspiration. Ere the rising sun
Shone o'er the deep, or mid the vault of night
The moon her silver lamp suspended; ere
The vales with springs were water'd, or with groves
Of oak or pine the ancient hills were crown'd;
Then the Great Spirit, whom his works adore,
Within his own deep essence view'd the forms,
The forms eternal of created things:
The radiant sun; the moon's nocturnal lamp;
The mountains and the streams; the ample stores
Of earth, of heaven, of nature. From the first,
On that full scene his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration: till, in time complete,
What he admir'd and lov'd his vital power
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organic frame:
Hence the green earth, and wild-resounding waves:
Hence light and shade, alternate; warmth and cold;
And bright autumnal skies, and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things.
But not alike to every mortal eye
Is this great scene unveil'd. For while the claims

Of social life to different labours urge
The active powers of man, with wisest care
Hath Nature on the multitude of minds
Impress'd a various bias; and to each
Decreed its province in the common toil.
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
The golden zones of Heaven; to some she gave
To search the story of eternal thought;
Of space, and time; of fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick movement: others by the hand
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue dwells in every vein
Of herbs or trees. But some to nobler hopes
Were destin'd: some within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
To these the Sire Omnipotent unfolds,
In fuller aspects and with fairer lights,
This picture of the world. Through every part
They trace the lofty sketches of his hand:
In earth, or air, the meadow's flowery store,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's mien
Dress'd in attractive smiles, they see portray'd
(As far as mortal eyes the portrait scan)
Those lineaments of beauty which delight
The mind Supreme. They also feel their force,
Enamour'd: they partake the' eternal joy.
For, as old Memnon's image long renown'd
Through fabling Egypt, at the genial touch
Of morning, from its inmost frame sent forth
Spontaneous music; so doth Nature's hand,
To certain attributes which matter claims,
Adapt the finer organs of the mind:
So the glad impulse of those kindred powers

(Of form, of colour's cheerful pomp, of sound
Melodious, or of motion aptly sped)
Detains the' enliven'd sense; till soon the soul
Feels the deep concord, and assents through all
Her functions. Then the charm by Fate prepar'd
Duffuseth its enchantment. Fancy dreams,
Rapt into high discourse with prophets old,
And wandering through Elysium, Fancy dreams
Of sacred fountains, of o'ershadowing groves,
Whose walks with godlike harmony resound:
Fountains, which Homer visits: happy groves,
Where Milton dwells: the intellectual power,
On the mind's throne, suspends his graver cares,
And smiles: the passions, to divine repose,
Persuaded yield; and love and joy alone
Are waking: love and joy, such as await
An angel's meditation. O! attend,
Who e'er thou art whom these delights can touch;
Whom Nature's aspect, Nature's simple garb
Can thus command: O! listen to my song;
And I will guide thee to her blissful walks,
And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
And point her gracious features to thy view.
Know then, whate'er of the world's ancient store,
Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected scenes,
With love and admiration thus inspire
Attentive Fancy, her delighted sons
In two illustrious orders comprehend,
Self-taught: from him whose rustic toil the lark
Cheers warbling, to the bard whose daring thoughts
Range the full orb of being, still the form,
Which fancy worships, or sublime or fair
Her votaries proclaim. I see them dawn:
I see the radiant visions where they rise,

More lovely than when Lucifer displays
His glittering forehead through the gates of morn,
To lead the train of Phœbus and the Spring.
  Say, why was man so eminently rais'd
Amid the vast Creation; why empower'd
Through life and death to dart his watchful eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that the' Omnipotent might send him forth,
In sight of angels and immortal minds,
As on an ample theatre to join
In contest with his equals, who shall best
The task achieve, the course of noble toils,
By Wisdom and by Mercy pre-ordain'd?
Might send him forth the sovereign good to learn;
To chase each meaner purpose from his breast;
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the pelting storms of chance and pain,
To hold straight on with constant heart and eye
Still fix'd upon his everlasting palm, [burns
The' approving smile of Heaven? Else wherefore
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
That seeks from day to day sublimer ends;
Happy, though restless? Why departs the soul
Wide from the track and journey of her times,
To grasp the good she knows not? In the field
Of things which may be, in the spacious field
Of science, potent arts, or dreadful arms,
To raise up scenes in which her own desires
Contented may repose; when things which are,
Pall on her temper, like a twice-told tale:
Her temper, still demanding to be free:
Spurning the rude control of wilful might;
Proud of her dangers brav'd, her griefs endur'd,
Her strength severely prov'd? To these high aims,

Which reason and affection prompt in man,
Not adverse nor unapt hath Nature fram'd
His bold imagination. For, amid
The various forms which this full world presents
Like rivals to his choice, what human breast
E'er doubts, before the transient and minute,
To prize the vast, the stable, the sublime;
Who, that from heights aërial sends his eye
Around a wild horizon, and surveys
Indus or Ganges rolling his broad wave
Through mountains, plains, through spacious cities
And regions dark with woods; will turn away [old,
To mark the path of some penurious rill
Which murmureth at his feet? Where does the
Consent her soaring fancy to restrain, [soul
Which bears her up, as on an eagle's wings,
Destin'd for highest Heaven; or which of fate's
Tremendous barriers shall confine her flight
To any humbler quarry? The rich earth
Cannot detain her; nor the ambient air
With all its changes. For a while with joy
She hovers o'er the sun, and views the small
Attendant orbs, beneath his sacred beam,
Emerging from the deep, like cluster'd isles
Whose rocky shores to the glad sailor's eye
Reflect the gleams of morning: for a while
With pride she sees his firm, paternal sway
Bend the reluctant planets to move each
Round its perpetual year. But soon she quits
That prospect: meditating loftier views,
She darts adventurous up the long career
Of comets; through the constellations holds
Her course, and now looks back on all the stars
Whose blended flames as with a milky stream

Part the blue region. Empyréan tracts,
Where happy souls beyond this concave heaven
Abide, she then explores, whence purer light
For countless ages travels through the' abyss,
Nor hath in sight of mortals yet arriv'd.
Upon the wide Creation's utmost shore
At length she stands, and the dread space beyond
Contemplates, half-recoiling: nathless down
The gloomy void, astonish'd, yet unquell'd,
She plungeth; down the' unfathomable gulf
Where God alone hath been. There her hopes
Rest at the fatal goal. For, from the birth
Of human kind, the Sovereign Maker said
That not in humble, nor in brief delight,
Nor in the fleeting echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find contentment; but, from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through Nature's opening walks enlarge her aim,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection fill the scene.
But lo, where beauty, dress'd in gentler pomp
With comely steps advancing, claims the [illegible]
Her charms inspire. O Beauty! source of praise,
Of honour ev'n to mute and lifeless things,
O thou that kindlest in each human heart
Love, and the wish of poets, when their tongue
Would teach to other bosoms what so charms
Their own; O child of Nature and the soul,
In happiest hour brought forth, the doubtful garb
Of words, of earthly language, all too mean,
Too lowly I account, in which to clothe
Thy form divine: for thee the mind alone
Beholds, nor half thy brightness can reveal

Through those dim organs, whose corporeal touch
O'ershadoweth thy pure essence. Yet, my Muse,
If Fortune call thee to the task, wait thou
Thy favourable seasons: then, while fear [bounds
And doubt are absent, through wide Nature's
Expatiate with glad step, and choose at will
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To manifest unblemish'd Beauty's praise,
And o'er the breasts of mortals to extend
Her gracious empire. Wilt thou to the isles
Atlantic, to the rich Hesperian clime,
Fly in the train of autumn; and look on,
And learn from him; while, as he roves around,
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches bloom with gold; where'er his foot
Imprints the soil, the ripening clusters swell,
Turning aside their foliage, and come forth
In purple lights, till every hillock glows
As with the blushes of an evening sky?
Or wilt thou that Thessalian landscape trace,
Where slow Penéus his clear glassy tide
Draws smoth along, between the winding cliffs
Of Ossa and the pathless woods unshorn
That wave o'er huge Olympus? Down the stream,
Look how the mountains with their double range
Embrace the vale of Tempé: from each side
Ascending steep to Heaven, a rocky mound
Cover'd with ivy and the laurel boughs
That crown'd young Phœbus for the Python slain.
Fair Tempé! on whose primrose-banks the morn
Awoke most fragrant, and the noon repos'd
In pomp of lights and shadows most sublime: [yet
Whose lawns, whose glades, ere human footsteps

Had trac'd the entrance, where the hallow'd haunt
Of sylvan powers immortal: where they sate
Oft in the golden age, the nymphs and fauns
Beneath some arbour branching o'er the flood,
And leaning round hung on the' instructive lips
Of hoary Pan, or o'er some open dale
Danc'd in light measures to his sevenfold pipe,
While Zephyr's wanton hand along their path,
Flung showers of painted blossoms, fertile dews,
And one perpetual Spring. But if our task
More lofty rites demand, with all good vows
Then let us hasten to the rural haunt
Where young Melissa dwells. Nor thou refuse
The voice which calls thee from thy lov'd retreat,
But hither, gentle maid, thy footsteps turn:
Here, to thy own unquestionable theme,
O fair, O graceful, bend thy polish'd brow,
Assenting; and the gladness of thy eyes
Impart to me, like morning's wished light
Seen through the vernal air. By yonder stream,
Where beach and elm along the bordering mead
Send forth wild melody from every bough,
Together let us wander; where the hills,
Cover'd with fleeces to the lowing vale,
Reply; where tidings of content and peace
Each echo brings. Lo, how the western sun
O'er fields and floods, o'er every living soul,
Diffuseth glad repose! There while I speak
Of Beauty's honours, thou, Melissa, thou
Shalt hearken, not unconscious, while I tell
How first from Heaven she came: how after all
The works of life, the elemental scenes,
The hours, the seasons, she had oft explor'd,
At length her favourite mansion and her throne

She fix'd in woman's form: what pleasing ties
To virtue bind her; what effectual aid
They lend each other's power; and how divin
Their union, should some unambitious maid,
To all the' enchantment of the' Idalian queen,
Add sanctity and wisdom: while my tongue
Prolongs the tale, Melissa, thou may'st feign
To wonder whence my rapture is inspir'd;
But soon the smile which dawns upon thy lip
Shall tell it, and the tenderer bloom o'er all
That soft cheek springing to the marble neck,
Which bends aside in vain, revealing more
What it would thus keep silent, and in vain
The sense of praise dissembling. Then my so
Great Nature's winning arts, which thus infor
With joy and love the rugged breast of man,
Should sound in numbers worthy such a them
While all whose souls have ever felt the force
Of those enchanting passions, to my lyre
Should throng attentive, and receive once mo
Their influence, unobscur'd by any cloud
Of vulgar care, and purer than the hand
Of Fortune can bestow: nor, to confirm
Their sway, should awful Contemplation scorn
To join his dictates to the genuine strain
Of Pleasure's tongue; nor yet should Pleasure'
Be much averse. Ye chiefly, gentle band
Of youths and virgins, who through many a w
And many a fond pursuit, as in some scene
Of magic bright and fleeting, are allur'd
By various beauty: if the pleasing toil
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and trust my words.
I do not mean, on bless'd Religion's seat

ting Superstition's gloomy form,
h your soothing hopes: I do not mean
the jealous thunderer fire the heavens,
pes infernal rend the groaning earth,
are you from your joys. My cheerful song
appier omens calls you to the field,
l with your generous ardour in the chase,
arm like you. Then tell me (for ye know)
leauty ever deign to dwell where use
titude are strangers? is her praise
s'd in aught whose most peculiar ends
ne and fruitless? or did Nature mean
easing call the herald of a lie,
e the shame of discord and disease,
n each fond admirer into snares,
baffled?—No: with better providence
neral mother, conscious how infirm
spring tread the paths of good and ill,
o the choice of credulous desire,
bjects the completest of their tribe
uish and commend. Yon flowery bank
in the soft magnificence of Spring,
t the flocks approve it? will they ask
edy fen for pasture? That clear rill
trickleth murmuring from the mossy rock,
ts less wholesome beverage to the worn
irsty traveller, than the standing pool
uddy weeds o'er-grown? Yon ragged vine,
lean and sullen clusters mourn the rage
us, will the wine-press or the bowl
of her, as of the swelling grape
glitters through the tendrils, like a gem
first it meets the sun? Or what are all
rious charms to life and sense adjoin'd?

Are they not pledges of a state entire,
Where native order reigns, with every part
In health, and every function well perform'd?
Thus then at first was Beauty sent from Heaven,
The lovely ministress of Truth and Good
In this dark world: for Truth and Good are one;
And Beauty dwells in them, and they in her,
With like participation. Wherefore then,
O sons of earth, would ye dissolve the tie?
O! wherefore with a rash and greedy aim
Seek ye to rove through every flattering scene
Which Beauty seems to deck, nor once inquire
Where is the suffrage of eternal Truth,
Or where the seal of undeceitful good,
To save your search from folly? Wanting these,
Lo, Beauty withers in your void embrace;
And with the glittering of an idiot's toy
Did fancy mock your vows. Nor yet let hope,
That kindliest inmate of the youthful breast,
Be hence appall'd; be turn'd to coward sloth,
Sitting in silence, with dejected eyes
Incurious, and with folded hands: far less
Let scorn of wild fantastic folly's dreams,
Or hatred of the bigot's savage pride,
Persuade you e'er that Beauty, or the love
Which waits on Beauty, may not brook to hear
The sacred lore of undeceitful good
And Truth eternal. From the vulgar crowd
Though Superstition, tyranness abhorr'd,
The reverence due to this majestic pair
With threats and execration still demands;
Though the tame wretch, who asks of her the way
To their celestial dwelling, she constrains
To quench or set at nought the lamp of God

Within his frame; through many a cheerless wild
Though forth she leads him credulous and dark,
And aw'd with dubious notion; though at length
Haply she plunge him into cloister'd cells
And mansions unrelenting as the grave,
But void of quiet, there to watch the hours
Of midnight; there, amid the screaming owl's
Dire songs, with spectres or with guilty shades
To talk of pangs and everlasting woe;
Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentle star
Presides o'er your adventure. From the bower
Where Wisdom sat with her Athenian sons,
Could but my happy hand entwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
Then (for what need of cruel fear to you,
To you whom godlike love can well command?)
Then should my powerful voice at once dispel
Those monkish horrors: should in words divine
Relate how favour'd minds like you inspir'd,
And taught their inspiration to conduct
By ruling Heaven's decree, through various walks,
And prospects various, but delightful all,
Move onward; while now myrtle groves appear,
Now arms and radiant trophies, now the rods
Of empire with the cerule throne, or now
The domes of contemplation and the Muse.
Led by that hope sublime, whose cloudless eye
Through the fair toils and ornaments of earth
Discerns the nobler life reserv'd for Heaven,
Favour'd alike they worship round the shrine
Wher Truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,
The undivided partners of her sway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O! let not us
By Pleasure's lying blandishments detain'd,

Of beauteous and sublime: with Him enthron'd
Ere days or years trod their ethereal way,
In his supreme intelligence enthron'd
The queen of love holds her unclouded state,
Urania. Thee, O Father! this extent
Of matter! Thee, the sluggish earth and tract
Of seas, the heavens and heavenly splendours feel
Pervading, quickening, moving. From the depth
Of thy great essence, forth did'st thou conduct
Eternal Form; and there, where Chaos reign'd,
Gav'st her dominion to erect her seat,
And sanctify the mansion. All her works
Well pleas'd thou didst behold: the gloomy fires
Of storm or earthquake, and the purest light
Of summer; soft Campania's new-born rose,
And the slow weed which pines on Russian hills,
Comely alike to thy full vision stand:
To thy surrounding vision, which unites
All essences and powers of the great world
In one sole order, fair alike they stand,
As features well consenting, and alike
Requir'd by Nature ere she could attain
Her just resemblance to the perfect shape
Of universal beauty, which with Thee
Dwelt from the first. Thou also, ancient mind,
Whom love and free beneficence await
In all thy doings; to inferior minds,
Thy offspring, and to man, thy youngest son,
Refusing no convenient gift nor good;
Their eyes didst open, in this earth, yon heaven,
Those starry worlds, the countenance divine
Of beauty to behold. But not to them
Dids't thou her awful magnitude reveal,
Such as before thine own unbounded sight
She stands, (for never shall created soul

Conceive that object) nor, to all their kinds,
The same in shape or features did'st thou frame
Her image. Measuring well their different spheres
Of sense and action, thy paternal hand
Hath for each race prepar'd a different test
Of Beauty, own'd and reverenc'd as their guide
Most apt, most faithful. Thence inform'd, they scan
The objects that surround them, and select;
Since the great whole disclaims their scanty view,
Each for himself selects peculiar parts
Of Nature; what the standard fix'd by Heaven
Within his breast approves; acquiring thus
A partial beauty, which becomes his lot;
A beauty which his eye may comprehend,
His hand may copy: leaving, O Supreme!
O Thou whom none hath utter'd! leaving all
To Thee that infinite, consummate form,
Which the great powers, the gods around thy throne
And nearest to thy counsels, know with thee
For ever to have been; but who she is,
Or what her likeness know not. Man surveys
A narrower scene, where by the mix'd effect
Of things corporeal on his passive mind,
He judgeth what is fair. Corporeal things
The mind of man impel with various powers,
And various features to his eye disclose.
The powers which move his sense with instant joy,
The features which attract his heart to love,
He marks, combines, reposits. Other powers
And features of the self-same thing (unless
The beauteous form, the creature of his mind,
Request their close alliance) he o'erlooks
Forgotten; or with self-beguiling zeal,
Whene'er his passions mingle in the work,

Half alters, half disowns. The tribes of men
Thus from their different functions and the shapes
Familiar to their eye, with art obtain,
Unconscious of their purpose, yet with art
Obtain the Beauty fitting man to love:
Whose proud desires from Nature's homely toil
Oft turn away, fastidious: asking still
His mind's high aid, to purify the form
From matter's gross communion; to secure
For ever, from the meddling hand of change
Or rude decay, her features; and to add
Whatever ornaments may suit her mien,
Where'er he finds them scatter'd through the paths
Of nature or of fortune. Then he seats
The' accomplish'd image deep within his breast,
Reviews it, and accounts it good and fair.
  Thus the one Beauty of the world entire,
The universal Venus, far beyond
The keenest effort of created eyes,
And their most wide horizon, dwells enthron'd
In ancient silence. At her footstool stands
An altar burning with eternal fire
Unsullied, unconsum'd. Here every hour,
Here every moment, in their turns arrive
Her offspring; an innumerable band
Of sisters, comely all! but differing far
In age, in stature, and expressive mien,
More than bright Helen from her new-born babe.
To this maternal shrine in turns they come,
Each with her sacred lamp; that from the source
Of living flame, which here immortal flows,
Their portions of its lustre they may draw
For days, or months, or years; for ages, some;
As their great parent's discipline requires.
Then to their several mansions they depart,

In stars, in planets, through the unknown shores
Of yon ethereal ocean. Who can tell,
Ev'n on the surface of this rolling earth,
How many make abode? The fields, the groves,
The winding rivers and the azure main,
Are render'd solemn by their frequent feet,
Their rites sublime. There each her destin'd home
Informs with that pure radiance from the skies
Brought down, and shines throughout her little [sphere,
Exulting. Straight, as travellers by night
Turn toward a distant flame, so some fit eye,
Among the various tenants of the scene,
Discerns the heaven-born phantom seated there,
And owns her charms. Hence the wide universe,
Through all the seasons of revolving worlds,
Bears witness with its people, gods and men,
To Beauty's blissful power, and with the voice
Of grateful admiration still resounds:
That voice to which is Beauty's frame divine,
As is the cunning of the master's hand
To the sweet accent of the well-tun'd lyre.

Genius of ancient Greece, whose faithful steps
Have led us to these awful solitudes
Of Nature and of Science; nurse rever'd
Of generous counsels and heroic deeds;
O! let some portion of thy matchless praise
Dwell in my breast, and teach me to adorn
This unattempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
Presumptuous counted, if amid the calm
Which Hesper sheds along the vernal heaven,
If I, from vulgar Superstition's walk,
Impatient steal, and from the' unseemly rites
Of splendid Adulation, to attend
With hymns thy presence in the sylvan shade,
By their malignant footsteps unprofan'd.

Come, O renowned power; thy glowing mien
Such, and so elevated all thy form,
As when the great barbaric lord, again
And yet again diminish'd, hid his face
Among the herd of satraps and of kings;
And, at the lightning of thy lifted spear,
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike sires
Of civil wisdom, thy unconquer'd youth
After some glorious day rejoicing round
Their new-erected trophy. Guide my feet
Through fair Lycéum's walk, the olive shades
Of Academus, and the sacred vale
Haunted by steps divine, where once beneath
That ever-living platane's ample boughs
Ilissus, by Socratic sounds detain'd,
On his neglected urn attentive lay;
While Boreas lingering on the neighbouring steep
With beauteous Orithyia, his love-tale
In silent awe suspended. There let me
With blameless hand, from thy unenvious fields,
Transplant some living blossoms, to adorn
My native clime: while, far beyond the meed
Of Fancy's toil aspiring, I unlock
The springs of ancient wisdom: while I add
(What cannot be disjoin'd from Beauty's praise)
Thy name and native dress, thy works belov'd
And honour'd: while to my compatriot youth
I point the great example of thy sons,
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

END OF BOOK I.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE SECOND.

1765.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction to the more difficult part of the subject. Of Truth and its three classes, matter of fact, experimental or scientifical truth, (contradistinguished from opinion) and universal truth; which last is either metaphysical or geometrical, either purely intellectual or perfectly abstracted. On the power of discerning truth depends that of acting with the view of an end; a circumstance essential to virtue. Of Virtue, considered in the divine mind as a perpetual and universal beneficence. Of human virtue, considered as a system of particular sentiments and actions, suitable to the design of Providence and the condition of man; to whom it constitutes the chief good and the first beauty. Of Vice and its origin. Of Ridicule: Its general nature and final cause. Of the Passions; particularly of those which relate to evil natural, or moral, and which are generally accounted painful, though not always unattended with pleasure.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

ns far of Beauty and the pleasing forms
hich man's untutor'd fancy, from the scenes
perfect of this ever-changing world,
ates; and views, enamour'd. Now my song
verer themes demand: mysterious truth;
d virtue, sovereign good: the spells, the trains,
progeny of Error: the dread sway
passion; and whatever hidden stores
m her own lofty deeds and from herself
mind acquires. Severer argument:
less attractive; nor deserving less
onstant ear. For what are all the forms
ie'd by fancy from corporeal things,
atness, or pomp, or symmetry of parts?
tending to the heart, soon feeble grows,
the blunt arrow 'gainst the knotty trunk,
ir impulse on the sense: while the pall'd eye
ects in vain its tribute; asks in vain,

Where are the ornaments it once admir'd?—
Not so the moral species, nor the powers
Of passion and of thought. The' ambitious mind
With objects boundless as her own desires
Can there converse: by these unfading forms
Touch'd and awaken'd still, with eager act
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
Her gifts, her godlike fortune. Such the scenes
Now opening round us. May the destin'd verse
Maintain its equal tenor, though in tracts
Obscure and arduous! May the source of light,
All-present, all-sufficient, guide our steps
Through every maze! and whom in childish years
From the loud throng, the beaten paths of wealth
And power, thou didst apart send forth to speak
In tuneful words concerning highest things,
Him still do thou, O Father! at those hours
Of pensive freedom, when the human soul
Shuts out the rumour of the world, him still
Touch thou with secret lessons: call thou back
Each erring thought; and let the yielding strains
From his full bosom, like a welcome rill
Spontaneous from its healthy fountain, flow!
  But from what name, what favourable sign,
What heavenly auspice, rather shall I date
My perilous excursion, than from truth,
That nearest inmate of the human soul;
Estrang'd from whom, the countenance divine
Of man disfigur'd and dishonour'd sinks
Among inferior things? For to the brutes
Perception and the transient boons of sense
Hath Fate imparted: but to man alone
Of sublunary beings was it given
Each fleeting impulse on the sensual powers

At leisure to review; with equal eye
To scan the passion of the stricken nerve,
Or the vague object striking: to conduct
From sense, the portal turbulent and loud,
Into the mind's wide palace one by one
The frequent, pressing, fluctuating forms,
And question and compare them. Thus he learns
Their birth and fortunes; how allied they haunt
The avenues of sense; what laws direct
Their union; and what various discords rise,
Or fix'd or casual: which when his clear thought
Retains, and when his faithful words express,
That living image of the' external scene,
As in a polish'd mirror held to view,
Is truth: where'er it varies from the shape
And hue of its exemplar in that part
Dim error lurks. Moreover, from without
When oft the same society of forms
In the same order have approach'd his mind,
He deigns no more their steps with curious heed
To trace; no more their features or their garb
He now examines; but of them and their
Condition, as with some diviner's tongue,
Affirms what Heaven in every distant place,
Through every future season, will decree.
This too is truth: where'er his prudent lips
Wait till experience diligent and slow
Has authoriz'd their sentence, this is truth!
A second, higher kind: the parent this
Of science; or the lofty power herself,
Science herself; on whom the wants and cares
Of social life depend; the substitute
Of God's own wisdom in this toilsome world;
The Providence of man. Yet oft in vain,

To earn her aid, with fix'd and anxious eye
He looks on Nature's and on Fortune's course:
Too much in vain. His duller visual ray
The stillness and the persevering acts
Of Nature oft elude; and Fortune oft
With step fantastic from her wonted walk
Turns into mazes dim; his sight is foil'd;
And the crude sentence of his faltering tongue
Is but opinion's verdict, half believ'd
And prone to change. Here thou, who feel'st thine
Congenial to my lyre's profounder tone, [ear
Pause, and be watchful. Hitherto the stores,
Which feed thy mind and exercise her powers,
Partake the relish of their native soil,
Their parent earth. But know, a nobler dower
Her Sire at birth decreed her; purer gifts
From his own treasure; forms which never deign'd
In eyes or ears to dwell, within the sense
Of earthly organs; but sublime were plac'd
In his essential reason, leading there
That vast ideal host which all his works
Through endless ages never will reveal.
Thus then endow'd, the feeble creature man,
The slave of hunger and the prey of death,
Ev'n now, ev'n here, in earth's dim prison bound,
The language of intelligence divine
Attains; repeating oft concerning one
And many, pass'd and present, parts and whole,
Those sovereign dictates which in furthest Heaven,
Where no orb rolls, eternity's fix'd ear
Hears from coëval truth, when chance nor change,
Nature's loud progeny, nor Nature's self
Dares intermeddle or approach her throne.
Ere long, o'er this corporeal world he learns

ıtend her sway; while calling from the deep,
earth and air, their multitudes untold
ures and of motions round his walk,
ch wide family some single birth
s in view, the' impartial type of all
thren; suffering it to claim, beyond
common heritage, no private gift,
oper fortune. Then whate'er his eye
discerns, his bold unerring tongue
ıneeth of the kindred, without bound,
ut condition. Such the rise of forms
ster'd far from sense and every spot
ar in the realms of space or time:
s the throne which man for Truth amid
aths of mutability hath built
, unshaken, still; and whence he views,
ter's mouldering structures, the pure forms
ngle or circle, cube or cone,
ive all; whose attributes nor force
e can alter. There he first conceives
ıeing, and an intellectual world
me this hour and ever. Thence he deems
own lot; above the painted shapes
eeting move o'er this terrestial scene
up; beyond the adamantine gates
th expatiates; as his birthright claims
ance in all the works of God;
es for endless time his plan of life,
ounts the universe itself his home.
nce also but from truth, the light of minds
an fortune gladden'd with the rays
ne? with the moral colours thrown
ery walk of this our social scene,
ing for the eyes of gods and men

The passions, actions, habitudes of life,
And rendering earth like Heaven, a sacred place
Where love and praise may take delight to dwell?
Let none with heedless tongue from Truth disjoin
The reign of Virtue. Ere the day-spring flow'd
Like sisters link'd in concord's golden chain,
They stood before the great Eternal Mind,
Their common parent; and by him were both
Sent forth among his creatures, hand in hand,
Inseparably join'd: nor e'er did Truth
Find an apt ear to listen to her lore, [Truth's
Which knew not Virtue's voice; nor, save where
Majestic words are heard and understood,
Doth Virtue deign to' inhabit. Go, inquire
Of Nature; not among Tartarian rocks,
Whither the hungry vulture with its prey
Returns; not where the lion's sullen roar
At noon resounds along the lonely banks
Of ancient Tigris: but her gentler scenes,
The dove-cote and the shepherd's fold at morn,
Consult; or by the meadow's fragrant hedge,
In spring-time when the woodlands first are green,
Attend the linnet singing to his mate
Couch'd o'er their tender young. To this fond care
Thou dost not virtue's honourable name
Attribute: wherefore, save that not one gleam
Of truth did e'er discover to themselves
Their little hearts, or teach them, by the' effects
Of that parental love, the love itself
To judge, and measure its officious deeds?
But man, whose eyelids truth has fill'd with day,
Discerns how skilfully to bounteous ends
His wise affections move; with free accord
Adopts their guidance; yields himself secure

To Nature's prudent impulse; and converts
Instinct to duty and to sacred law.
Hence right and fit on earth: while thus to man
The' Almighty Legislator hath explain'd
The springs of action fix'd within his breast,
Hath given him power to slacken or restrain
Their effort; and hath shown him how they join
Their partial movements with the master-wheel
Of the great world, and serve that sacred end
Which he, the' unerring reason, keeps in view.
For (if a mortal tongue may speak of him
And his dread ways) even as his boundless eye,
Connecting every form and every change,
Beholds the perfect beauty; so his will,
Through every hour producing good to all
The family of creatures, is itself
The perfect virtue. Let the grateful swain
Remember this, as oft with joy and praise
He looks upon the falling dews which clothe
His lawns with verdure, and the tender seed
Nourish within his furrows: when between
Dead seas and burning skies, where long unmov'd
The bark had languish'd, now a rustling gale
Lifts o'er the fickle waves her dancing prow,
Let the glad pilot, bursting out in thanks,
Remember this: lest blind o'erweening pride
Pollute their offerings: lest their selfish heart
Say to the heavenly Ruler, 'At *our* call
Relents thy power: by *us* thy arm is mov'd.'
Fools! who of God as of each other deem:
Who his invariable acts deduce
From sudden counsels transient as their own,
Nor further of his bounty, than the' event
Which haply *meets their loud* and eager prayer.

Acknowledge; nor, beyond the drop minute
Which haply they have tasted, heed the source
That flows for all; the fountain of his love
Which, from the summit where he sits enthron'd,
Pours health and joy, unfailing streams throughout
The spacious region flourishing in view,
The goodly work of his eternal day,
His own fair universe; on which alone
His counsels fix, and whence alone his will
Assumes her strong direction. Such is now
His sovereign purpose: such it was before
All multitude of years. For his right arm
Was never idle: his bestowing love
Knew no beginning; was not as a change
Of mood that woke at last and started up,
After a deep and solitary sloth
Of boundless ages. No: He now is good,
He ever was. The feet of hoary Time
Through their eternal course have travell'd o'er
No speechless, lifeless desert; but through scenes
Cheerful with bounty still; among a pomp
Of worlds, for gladness round the Maker's throne
Loud-shouting, or, in many dialects
Of hope and filial trust, imploring thence
The fortunes of their people; where so fix'd
Were all the dates of being, so dispos'd
To every living soul of every kind
The field of motion and the hour of rest,
That each the general happiness might serve;
And, by the discipline of laws divine
Convinc'd of folly or chastis'd from guilt,
Each might at length be happy. What remains
Shall be like what is pass'd; but fairer still,
And still increasing in the godlike gifts

Of life and truth. The same paternal hand,
From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,
To men, to angels, to celestial minds,
Will ever lead the generations on
Through higher scenes of being: while supplied
From day to day by his enlivening breath,
Inferior orders in succession rise
To fill the void below. As flame ascends,
As vapours to the earth in showers return,
As the poison'd ocean toward the' attracting moon
Swells, and the ever-listening planets charm'd
By the sun's call their onward pace incline,
So all things which have life aspire to God,
Exhaustless fount of intellectual day!
Centre of souls! Nor doth the mastering voice
Of Nature cease within to prompt aright
Their steps; nor is the care of Heaven withheld
From sending to the toil external aid;
That in their stations all may persevere
To climb the ascent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.
  But this eternal fabric was not rais'd
For man's inspection. Though to some be given
To catch a transient visionary glimpse
Of that majestic scene which boundless Power
Prepares for perfect goodness, yet in vain
Would human life her faculties expand
To' embosom such an object. Nor could e'er
Virtue or praise have touch'd the hearts of men,
Had not the Sovereign Guide, through every stage
Of this their various journey, pointed out
New hopes, new toils, which to their humble sphere
Of sight and strength might such importance hold
As doth the wide creation to his own.

Hence all the little charities of life,
With all their duties: hence that favorite palm
Of human will, when duty is suffic'd,
And still the liberal soul in ampler deeds
Would manifest herself; that sacred sign
Of her rever'd affinity to Him
Whose bounties are his own; to whom none said,
'Create the wisest, fullest, fairest world,
And make its offspring happy;' who, intent
Some likeness of Himself among his works
To view, hath pour'd into the human breast
A ray of knowledge and of love, which guides
Earth's feeble race to act their Maker's part,
Self-judging, self-oblig'd: while, from before
That godlike function, the gigantic power
Necessity, though wont to curb the force
Of chaos and the savage elements,
Retires abash'd, as from a scene too high
For her brute tyranny, and with her bears
Her scorned followers, Terror and base Awe
Who blinds herself, and that ill-suited pair,
Obedience link'd with Hatred. Then the soul
Arises in her strength; and, looking round
Her busy sphere, whatever work she views,
Whatever counsel bearing any trace
Of her Creator's likeness, whether apt
To aid her fellows or preserve herself
In her superior functions unimpair'd,
Thither she turns exulting: that she claims
As her peculiar good: on that, through all
The fickle seasons of the day, she looks
With reverence still: to that, as to a fence
Against affliction and the darts of pain,
Her drooping hopes repair: and, once oppos'd

To that, all other pleasure, other wealth,
Vile, as the dross upon the molten gold,
Appears, and loathsome as the briny sea
To him who languishes with thirst and sighs
For some known fountain pure. For what can strive
With Virtue? Which of Nature's regions vast
Can in so many forms produce to sight
Such powerful Beauty? Beauty, which the eye
Of Hatred cannot look upon secure:
Which Envy's self contemplates, and is turn'd
Ere long to tenderness, to infant smiles,
Or tears of humblest love. Is aught so fair
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,
The Summer's noontide groves, the purple eve
At harvest-home, or in the frosty moon
Glittering on some smooth sea; is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship? as the honour'd roof
Whither from highest Heaven immortal Love
His torch ethereal and his golden bow
Propitious brings, and there a temple holds
To whose unspotted service, gladly vow'd,
The social band of parent, brother, child,
With smiles and sweet discourse and gentle deeds
Adore his Power? What gift of richest clime
E'er drew such eager eyes, or prompted such
Deep wishes, as the zeal that snatcheth back
From Slander's poisonous tooth a foe's renown;
Or crosseth danger in his lion walk,
A rival's life to rescue? as the young
Athenian warrior sitting down in bonds,
That his great father's body might not want
A peaceful, humble tomb? the Roman wife
Teaching her lord how harmless was the wound
Of death, how impotent the tyrant's rage,
Who nothing more could threaten to afflict

Their faithful love? Or is there in the' abyss,
Is there, among the adamantine spheres
Wheeling unshaken through the boundless void,
Aught that with half such majesty can fill
The human bosom, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
Amid the crowd of patriots; and, his arm
Aloft extending like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook the crimson sword
Of Justice in his rapt astonish'd eye,
And bade the father of his country hail,
For lo, the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free? Thus, through the path
Of human life, in various pomp array'd,
Walks the wise daughter of the Judge of Heaven,
Fair Virtue; from her Father's throne supreme
Sent down to utter laws, such as on earth
Most apt he knew, most powerful to promote
The weal of all his works, the gracious end
Of his dread empire. And though haply man's
Obscurer sight, so far beyond himself
And the brief labours of his little home,
Extends not; yet, by the bright presence won
Of this divine instructress, to her sway
Pleas'd he assents, nor heeds the distant goal
To which her voice conducts him. Thus hath God
Still looking toward his own high purpose, fix'd
The virtues of his creatures: thus he rules
The parent's fondness and the patriot's zeal;
Thus the warm sense of honour and of shame;
The vows of gratitude, the faith of love;
And all the comely intercourse of praise,
The joy of human life, the earthly Heaven!
How far unlike them must the lot of guilt

Be found? Or what terrestrial woe can match
The self-convicted bosom, which hath wrought
The bane of others, or enslav'd itself
With shackles vile; Not poison, nor sharp fire,
Nor the worst pangs that ever monkish hate
Suggested, or despotic rage impos'd,
Were at that season an unwish'd exchange;
When the soul loaths herself: when, flying thence
To crowds, on every brow she sees portray'd
Fell demons, Hate or Scorn, which drive her back
To solitude, her Judge's voice divine
To hear in secret, haply sounding through
The troubled dreams of midnight, and still, still
Demanding for his violated laws
Fit recompense, or charging her own tongue
To speak the' award of Justice on herself.
For well she knows what faithful hints within
Were whisper'd, to beware the lying forms
Which turn'd her footsteps from the safer way,
What cautions to suspect their painted dress,
And look with steady eyelid on their smiles,
Their frowns, their tears. In vain: the dazzling hues
Of Fancy, and Opinion's eager voice,
Too much prevail'd. For mortals tread the path
In which Opinion says, they follow good
Or fly from evil: and Opinion gives
Report of good or evil, as the scene
Was drawn by Fancy, pleasing or deform'd:
Thus her report can never there be true
Where fancy cheats the intellectual eye
With glaring colours and distorted lines.
Is there a man to whom the name of death
Brings terror's ghastly pageants conjur'd up
Before him, death-bed groans, and dismal vows,

And the frail soul plung'd headlong from the brink
Of life and daylight down the gloomy air,
An unknown depth, to gulfs of torturing fire
Unvisited by mercy? Then what hand
Can snatch this dreamer from the fatal toils
Which Fancy and Opinion thus conspire
To twine around his heart? Or who shall hush
Their clamour, when they tell him that to die,
To risk those horrors, as a direr curse [prayers
Than basest life can bring? Though Love with
Most tender, with affliction's sacred tears,
Beseech his aid; though gratitude and faith
Condemn each step which loiters; yet let none
Make answer for him that if any frown
Of danger thwart his path, he will not stay
Content, and be a wretch to be secure.
Here Vice begins then; at the gate of life,
Ere the young multitude to diverse roads
Part like fond pilgrims on a journey' unknown,
Sits Fancy, deep enchantress; and to each
With kind maternal looks presents her bowl,
A potent beverage. Heedless they comply:
Till the whole soul from that mysterious draught
Is ting'd, and every transient thought imbibes
Of gladness or disgust, desire on fear,
One homebred colour: which not all the lights
Of science e'er shall change; not all the storms
Of adverse fortune wash away, nor yet
The robe of purest virtue quite conceal.
Thence on they pass, where meeting frequent
Of good and evil, cunning phantoms apt [shapes
To fire or freeze the breast, with them they join
In dangerous parley; listening oft, and oft
Gazing with reckless passion, while its garb

The spectre heightens, and its pompous tale
Repeats with some new circumstance to suit
That early tincture of the hearer's soul.
And should the guardian, Reason, but for one
Short moment yield to this illusive scene
His ear and eye, the' intoxicating charm
Involves him, till no longer he discerns,
Or only guides to err. Then revel forth
A furious band that spurn him from the throne,
And all is uproar. Hence Ambition climbs
With sliding feet and hands impure, to grasp
Those solemn toys which glitter in his view
On Fortune's rugged steep: hence pale Revenge
Unsheaths her murderous dagger: Rapine hence
And envious Lust, by venal fraud upborne,
Surmount the reverend barrier of the laws [crimes
Which kept them from their prey: hence all the
That e'er defil'd the earth, and all the plagues
That follow them for vengeance, in the guise
Of Honour, Safety, Pleasure, Ease, or Pomp
Stole first into the fond believing mind.

Yet not by Fancy's witchcraft on the brain
Are always the tumultuous passions driven
To guilty deeds, nor Reason bound in chains
That Vice alone may lord it. Oft adorn'd
With motley pageants, Folly mounts his throne,
And plays her idiot-antics, like a queen.
A thousand garbs she wears: a thousand ways
She whirls her giddy empire. Lo, thus far
With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre
I sing for contemplation link'd with love,
A pensive theme. Now haply should my song
Unbend that serious countenance, and learn
Thalia's tripping gait, her shrill-ton'd voice,

Her wiles familiar: whether scorn she darts
In wanton ambush from her lip or eye,
Or whether with a sad disguise of care
O'ermantling her gay brow, she acts in sport
The deeds of Folly, and from all sides round
Calls forth impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke;
Her province. But through every comic scene
To lead my Muse with her light pencil arm'd;
Through every swift occasion which the hand
Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
Distends her labouring sides and chokes her tongue;
Were endless as to sound each grating note [grave
With which the rooks, and chattering daws, and
Unwieldy inmates of the village pond,
The changing seasons of the sky proclaim;
Sun, cloud, or shower. Suffice it to have said,
Where'er the power of Ridicule displays
Her quaint-ey'd visage, some incongruous form,
Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on her quick perception: whether Pomp,
Or Praise, or Beauty be dragg'd in and shown
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul deformity is wont to dwell;
Or whether these with shrewd and wayward spite
Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of beauty, or the boast of praise.
  Ask we for what fair end the' Almighty Sire
In mortal bosoms stirs this gay contempt,
These grateful pangs of laughter; from disgust
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
Wild Folly's aims? For though the sober light
Of truth slow-dawning on the watchful mind

At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil; yet benignant Heaven,
Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause
From labour and from care the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of Nature, therefore stamp'd
These glaring scenes with characters of scorn,
As broad, as obvious to the passing clown
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.
  But other evils o'er the steps of man
Through all his walks impend; against whose might
The slender darts of Laughter nought avail:
A trivial warfare. Some, like cruel guards,
On Nature's ever-moving throne attend;
With mischief arm'd for him whoe'er shall thwart
The path of her inexorable wheels,
While she pursues the work that must be done
Through ocean, earth, and air. Hence, frequent forms
Of woe; the merchant, with his wealthy bark,
Buried by dashing waves; the traveller
Pierc'd by the pointed lightning in his haste;
And the poor husbandman, with folded arms,
Surveying his lost labours, and a heap
Of blasted chaff the product of the field
Whence he expected bread. But worse than these
I deem, far worse, that other race of ills
Which human kind rear up among themselves;
That horrid offspring which misgovern'd Will
Bears to fantastic Error; vices, crimes,
Furies that curse the earth, and make the blows,
The heaviest blows, of Nature's innocent hand

Seem sport: which are indeed but as the care
Of a wise parent, who solicits good
To all her house, though haply at the price
Of tears and froward wailing and reproach
From some unthinking child, whom not the less
Its mother destines to be happy still.
  These sources then of pain, this double lot
Of evil in the' inheritance of man,
Requir'd for his protection no slight force,
No careless watch; and therefore was his breast
Fenc'd round with passions quick to be alarm'd,
Or stubborn to oppose; with fear, more swift
Than beacons catching flame from hill to hill,
Where armies land; with anger, uncontroll'd
As the young lion bounding on his prey;
With sorrow, that locks up the struggling heart,
And shame, that overcasts the drooping eye
As with a cloud of lightning. These the part
Perform of eager monitors, and goad
The soul more sharply than with points of steel,
Her enemies to shun or to resist.
And as those passions, that converse with good,
Are good themselves; as hope and love and joy,
Among the fairest and the sweetest boons
Of life, we rightly count: so these, which guard
Against invading evil, still excite
Some pain, some tumult: these, within the mind
Too oft admitted or too long retain'd,
Shock their frail seat, and by their uncurb'd rage
To savages more fell than Libya breeds
Transform themselves: till human thought becomes
A gloomy ruin, haunt of shapes unbless'd,
Of self-tormenting fiends; horror, despair,
Hatred, and wicked envy: foes to all

The works of Nature and the gifts of Heaven.
But when through blameless paths to righteous ends
Those keener passions urge the' awaken'd soul,
I would not, as ungracious violence,
Their sway describe, nor from their free career
The fellowship of Pleasure quite exclude.
For what can render, to the self-approv'd,
Their temper void of comfort, though in pain?
Who knows not with what majesty divine
The forms of Truth and Justice to the mind
Appear, ennobling oft the sharpest woe
With triumph and rejoicing? Who, that bears
A human bosom, hath not often felt
How dear are all those ties which bind our race
In gentleness together; and how sweet
Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
Be kind or cruel? Ask the faithful youth
Why the cold urn, of her whom long he lov'd,
So often fills his arms; so often draws
His lonely footsteps, silent and unseen,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
Oh! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
Those sacred hours when, stealing from the noise
Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes
With Virtue's kindest looks his aching breast,
And turns his tears to rapture? Ask the crowd,
Which flies impatient from the village walk
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below
The savage winds have hurl'd upon the coast
Some helpless bark; while holy Pity melts
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair;

While every mother closer to her breast
Catcheth her child, and pointing where the wav
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
As one poor wretch, who spreads his piteous ar
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,
As now another, dash'd against the rock,
Drops lifeless down. O! deemest thou indeed
No pleasing influence here by Nature given
To mutual terror and Compassion's tears?
No tender charm mysterious, which attracts
O'er all that edge of pain the social powers
To this their proper action and their end?
Ask thy own heart; when, at the midnight hour,
Slow through that pensive gloom thy pausing ey
Led by the glimmering taper, moves around
The reverend volumes of the dead, the songs
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by fame
For Grecian heroes, where the Sovereign Power
Of heaven and earth surveys the' immortal page,
Even as a father meditating all
The praises of his son, and bids the rest
Of mankind there the fairest model learn
Of their own nature, and the noblest deeds
Which yet the world hath seen. If then thy sou
Join in the lot of those diviner men;
Say, when the prospect darkens on thy view;
When, sunk by many a wound, heroic states
Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown
Of hard Ambition; when the generous band
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires
Lie side by side in death; when brutal Force
Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp
Of guardian power, the majesty of rule,
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,

To poor dishonest pageants, to adorn
A robber's walk, and glitter in the eyes
Of such as bow the knee; when beauteous works,
Rewards of virtue, sculptur'd forms which deck'd
With more than human grace the warrior's arch
Or patriot's tomb' now victims to appease
Tyrannic envy, strew the common path
With awful ruins; when the Muse's haunt,
The marble porch where wisdom wont to talk
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
Or female Superstition's midnight prayer;
When ruthless havoc from the hand of Time
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer stroke
To mow the monuments of glory down;
Till Desolation o'er the grass-grown street
Expands her raven wings, and from the gate
Where senates once the weal of nations plann'd,
Hisseth the gliding snake through hoary weeds
That clasp the mouldering column: thus when all
The widely-mournful scene is fix'd within
Thy throbbing bosom; when the patriot's tear
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,
Or dash Octavius from the trophied car;
Say, doth thy secret soul repine to taste
The big distress? or would't thou then exchange
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
Of silent flatterers bending to his nod;
And o'er them, like a giant, casts his eye,
And says within himself, 'I am a King,
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe

Intrude upon mine ear?" The dregs corrupt
Of barbarous ages, that Circæan draught
Of Servitude and Folly, have not yet,
(Bless'd be the' Eternal Ruler of the world!)
Yet have not so dishonour'd, so deform'd
The native judgment of the human soul,
Nor so effac'd the image of her Sire.

END OF BOOK II.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE THIRD.

UNFINISHED.

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THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

HAT tongue then may explain the various fate
hich reigns o'er earth? or who to mortal eyes
ıstrate this perplexing labyrinth
joy and woe, through which the feet of man
e doom'd to wander? That Eternal Mind
om passions, wants, and envy far estrang'd,
ho built the spacious universe, and deck'd
ch part so richly with whate'er pertains
life, to health, to pleasure; why bade he
e viper Evil, creeping in, pollute
e goodly scene, and with insidious rage,
hile the poor inmate looks around and smiles,
rt her fell sting with poison to his soul?—
rd is the question, and from ancient days
th still oppress'd with care the sage's thought;
th drawn forth accents from the poet's lyre
o sad, too deeply plaintive: nor did e'er
ose chiefs of human kind, from whom the light
heavenly truth first gleam'd on barbarous lands,
rget this dreadful secret, when they told
hat wondrous things had to their favour'd eyes

And ears on cloudy mountain been reveal'd,
Or in deep cave by nymph or power divine,
Portentous oft and wild. Yet one I know,
Could I the speech of lawgivers assume,
One old and splendid tale I would record
With which the muse of Solon in sweet strains
Adorn'd this theme profound, and render'd all
Its darkness, all its terrors, bright as noon,
Or gentle as the golden star of eve.
Who knows not Solon? last, and wisest far,
Of those whom Greece triumphant in the height
Of glory, styl'd her fathers? him whose voice
Through Athens hush'd the storm of civil wrath;
Taught envious Want and cruel Wealth to join
In friendship: and, with sweet compulsion, tam'd
Minerva's eager people to his laws,
Which their own goddess in his breast inspir'd?
'Twas now the time when his heroic task
Seem'd but perform'd in vain: when sooth'd by years
Of flattering service, the fond multitude
Hung with their sudden counsels on the breath
Of great Pisistratus: that chief renown'd,
Whom Hermes and the' Idalian queen had train'd,
Ev'n from his birth, to every powerful art
Of pleasing and persuading: from whose lips
Flow'd eloquence, which like the vows of love
Could steal away suspicion from the hearts
Of all who listen'd. Thus from day to day
He won the general suffrage, and beheld
Each rival overshadow'd and depress'd
Beneath his ampler state: yet oft complain'd,
As one less kindly treated, who had hop'd
To merit favour, but submits perforce
To find another's services prefer'd,
Nor yet relaxeth aught of faith or zeal.

Then tales were scatter'd of his envious foes,
Of snares that watch'd his fame, of daggers aim'd
Against his life. At last with trembling limbs,
His hair diffus'd and wild, his garments loose,
And stain'd with blood from self-inflicted wounds,
He burst into the public place, as there,
There only, were his refuge; and declar'd,
In broken words, with sighs of deep regret,
The mortal danger he had scarce repell'd.
Fir'd with his tragic tale, the' indignant crowd,
To guard his steps, forthwith a menial band,
Array'd beneath his eye for deeds of war,
Decree. O still too liberal of their trust,
And oft betray'd by over-grateful love,
The generous people! Now behold him fenc'd
By mercenary weapons, like a king,
Forth issuing from the city gate at eve
To seek his rural mansion, and with pomp
Crowding the public road. The swain stops short,
And sighs: the' officious townsmen stand at gaze,
And shrinking give the sullen pageant room.
Yet not the less obsequious was his brow;
Nor less profuse of courteous words his tongue,
Of gracious gifts his hand: the while by stealth,
Like a small torrent fed with evening showers,
His train increas'd; till at that fatal time,
Just as the public eye, with doubt and shame
Startled, began to question what it saw;
Swift as the sound of earthquakes rush'd a voice
Through Athens, that Pisistratus had fill'd
The rocky citadel with hostile arms,
Had barr'd the steep ascent, and sate within
Amid his hirelings, meditating death
To all whose stubborn necks his yoke refus'd.
Where then was Solon? After ten long years

Of absence, full of haste from foreign shores
The sage, the lawgiver had now arriv'd:
Arriv'd, alas! to see that Athens, that
Fair temple rais'd by him, and *sacred* call'd
To Liberty and Concord, now profan'd
By savage hate, or sunk into a den
Of slaves who crouch beneath the master's scourge,
And deprecate his wrath and court his chains.
Yet did not the wise patriot's grief impede
His virtuous will, nor was his heart inclin'd
One moment with such woman-like distress
To view the transient storms of civil war,
As thence to yield his country and her hopes
To all-devouring bondage. His bright helm,
Ev'n while the traitor's impious act is told,
He buckles on his hoary head; he girds
With mail his stooping breast: the shield, the spear
He snatcheth; and with swift indignant strides
The' assembled people seeks; proclaims aloud
It was no time for counsel: in their spears
Lay all their prudence now: the tyrant yet
Was not so firmly seated on his throne,
But that one shock of their united force
Would dash him from the summit of his pride
Headlong and grovelling in the dust. 'What else
Can re-assert the lost Athenian name,
So cheaply to the laughter of the world
Betray'd; by guile beneath an infant's faith
So mock'd and scorn'd? Away then: Freedom now
And Safety dwell not but with fame in arms.
Myself will show you where their mansion lies,
And through the walks of danger or of death
Conduct you to them.' While he spake, through all
Their crowded ranks his quick sagacious eye
He darted; where no cheerful voice was heard

Of social daring; no stretch'd arm was seen
Hastening their common task: but pale mistrust
Wrinkled each brow: they shook their heads, and
down [doubts
Their slack hands hung: cold sighs and whisper'd
From breath to breath stole round. The sage
meantime
Look'd speechless on, while his big bosom heav'd
Struggling with shame and sorrow: till at last
A tear broke forth; and, 'O immortal shades,
O Theseus! (he exclaim'd) O Codrus! where,
Where are ye now? behold for what ye toil'd
Through life! behold for whom ye chose to die.'
No more he added; but with lonely steps,
Weary and slow, his silver beard depress'd,
And his stern eyes bent heedless on the ground,
Back to his silent dwelling he repair'd.
There o'er the gate, his armour, as a man
Whom from the service of the war his chief
Dismisseth after no inglorious toil,
He fix'd in general view. One wishful look
He sent, unconscious, toward the public place
At parting: then beneath his quiet roof,
Without a word, without a sigh, retir'd.
Scarce had the morrow's sun his golden rays
From sweet Hymettus darted o'er the fanes
Of Cecrops to the Salaminian shores,
When, lo, on Solon's threshold met the feet
Of four Athenians by the same sad care
Conducted all: than whom the state beheld
None nobler. First came Megacles, the son
Of great Alcmæon, whom the Lydian king,
The mild, unhappy Crœsus, in his days
Of glory had with costly gifts adorn'd,
Fair vessels, splendid garments, tinctur'd webs

And heaps of treasur'd gold, beyond the lot
Of many sovereigns; thus requiting well
That hospitable favour which erewhile
Alcmæon to his messengers had shown,
Whom he with offerings worthy of the god
Sent from his throne in Sardis, to revere
Apollo's Delphic shrine. With Megacles
Approach'd his son, whom Agarista bore,
The virtuous child of Clisthenes, whose hand
Of Grecian sceptres the most ancient far
In Sicyon sway'd: but greater fame he drew
From arms control'd by justice, from the love
Of the wise Muses, and the' unenvied wreath
Which glad Olympia gave. For thither once
His warlike steeds the hero led, and there
Contended through the tumult of the course
With skilful wheels. Then victor at the goal,
Amid the' applauses of assembled Greece,
High on his car he stood and wav'd his arm.
Silence ensued: when straight the herald's voice
Was heard, inviting every Grecian youth,
Whom Clisthenes content might call his son,
To visit, ere twice thirty days were pass'd,
The towers of Sicyon. There the chief decreed,
Within the circuit of the following year,
To join at Hymen's altar, hand in hand
With his fair daughter, him among the guests [all
Whom worthiest he should deem. Forthwith from
The bounds of Greece the' ambitious wooers came:
From rich Hesperia; from the' Illyrian shore,
Where Epidamnus over Adria's surge
Looks on the setting sun; from those brave tribes
Chaonian or Molossian whom the race
Of great Achilles governs, glorying still
In Troy o'erthrown; from rough Ætolia, nurse

Of men who first among the Greeks threw off
The yoke of kings, to commerce and to arms
Devoted; from Thessalia's fertile meads,
Where flows Penéus near the lofty walls
Of Cranon old; from strong Eretria, queen
Of all Eubœàn cities, who, sublime
On the steep margin of Euripus, views
Across the tide the Marathonian plain,
Not yet the haunt of glory. Athens too,
Minerva's care, among her graceful sons
Found equal lovers for the princely maid:
Nor was proud Argos wanting; nor the domes
Of sacred Elis; nor the' Arcadian groves
That overshade Alphéus, echoing oft
Some shepherd's song. But through the' illustrious band
Was none who might with Megacles compare
In all the honours of unblemish'd youth.
His was the beauteous bride: and now their son
Young Clisthenes, betimes, at Solon's gate
Stood anxious; leaning forward on the arm
Of his great sire, with earnest eyes that ask'd
When the slow hinge would turn, with restless feet,
And cheeks now pale, now glowing: for his heart
Throbb'd full of bursting passions, anger, grief,
With scorn imbitter'd, by the generous boy
Scarce understood; but which, like noble seeds,
Are destin'd for his country and himself
In riper years to bring forth fruits divine
Of liberty and glory. Next appear'd
Two brave companions whom one mother bore
To different lords: but whom the better ties
Of firm esteem and friendship render'd more
Than brothers: first Miltiades, who drew
From godlike Æacus his ancient line;

That Æacus whose unimpeach'd renown
For sanctity and justice, won the lyre
Of elder bards to celebrate him thron'd
In Hades o'er the dead, where his decrees
The guilty soul within the burning gates
Of Tartarus compel, or send the good
To' inhabit with eternal health and peace
The valleys of Elysium. From a stem
So sacred, ne'er could worthier scion spring
Than this Miltiades; whose aid ere long
The chiefs of Thrace, already on their ways
Sent by the' inspir'd foreknowing maid who sits
Upon the Delphic tripod, shall implore
To wield their sceptre, and the rural wealth
Of fruitful Chersonesus to protect
With arms and laws. But, nothing careful now
Save for his injur'd country, here he stands
In deep solicitude with Cymon join'd:
Unconscious both what widely different lots
Await them, taught by Nature as they are
To know one common good, one common ill.
For Cymon not his valour, not his birth
Deriv'd from Codrus, not a thousand gifts
Dealt round him with a wise, benignant hand;
No, not the' Olympic olive by himself
From his own brow transferr'd to sooth the mind
Of this Pisistratus, can long preserve
From the fell envy of the tyrant's sons,
And their assassin dagger. But if death
Obscure upon his gentle steps attend,
Yet fate an ample recompense prepares
In his victorious son, that other great
Miltiades, who o'er the very throne
Of glory shall with Time's assiduous hand
In adamantine characters engrave

The name of Athens; and, by freedom arm'd
'Gainst the gigantic pride of Asia's king,
Shall all the' achievements of the heroes old
Surmount; of Hercules, of all who sail'd
From Thessaly with Jason, all who fought
For empire or for fame at Thebes or Troy.
  Such were the patriots who within the porch
Of Solon had assembled. But the gate
Now opens, and across the ample floor
Straight they proceed into an open space
Bright with the beams of morn: a verdant spot,
Where stands a rural altar, pil'd with sods
Cut from the grassy turf, and girt with wreaths
Of branching palm. Here Solon's self they found
Clad in a robe of purple pure, and deck'd
With leaves of olive on his reverend brow.
He bow'd before the altar, and o'er cakes
Of barley from two earthen vessels pour'd
Of honey and of milk a plenteous stream;
Calling meantime the Muses to accept
His simple offering, by no victim ting'd
With blood, nor sullied by destroying fire.
But such as for himself Apollo claims
In his own Delos, where his favourite haunt
Is thence the Altar of the Pious nam'd.
Unseen the guests drew near, and silent view'd
That worship; till the hero-priest his eye
Turn'd toward a seat on which prepar'd there lay
A branch of laurel. Then his friends confess'd
Before him stood. Backward his step he drew,
As loth that care or tumult should approach
Those early rights divine: but soon their looks,
So anxious, and their hands, held forth with such
Desponding gesture, bring him on perforce
To speak to their affliction. 'Are you come,

(He cried) to mourn with me this common shame?
Or ask ye some new effort which may break
Our fetters? Know then, of the public cause
Not for yon traitor's cunning or his might
Do I despair: nor could I wish from Jove
Aught dearer, than at this late hour of life,
As once by laws, so now by strenuous arms,
From impious violation to assert
The rights our fathers left us. But, alas!
What arms? or who shall wield them? Ye beheld
The' Athenian people. Many bitter days
Must pass, and many wounds from cruel pride
Be felt, ere yet their partial hearts find room
For just resentment, or their hands indure
To smite this tyrant brood, so near to all
Their hopes, so oft admir'd, so long belov'd.
That time will come, however. Be it yours
To watch its fair approach, and urge it on
With honest prudence: me it ill beseems
Again to supplicate the' unwilling crowd
To rescue from a vile deceiver's hold
That envied power, which once with eager zeal
They offer'd to myself; nor can I plunge
In counsels deep and various, nor prepare
For distant wars, thus faltering as I tread
On life's last verge, ere long to join the shades
Of Minos and Lycurgus. But behold
What care employs me now. My vows I pay
To the sweet Muses, teachers of my youth
And solace of my age. If right I deem
Of the still voice that whispers at my heart,
The' immortal sisters have not quite withdrawn
Their old harmonious influence. Let your tongues
With sacred silence favour what I speak,
And haply shall my faithful lips be taught

To' unfold celestial counsels, which may arm
As with impenetrable steel your breasts
For the long strife before you, and repel
The darts of adverse fate.' He said, and snatch'd
The laurel bough, and sate in silence down,
Fix'd, wrap'd in solemn musing, full before
The sun, who now from all his radiant orb
Drove the grave clouds, and pour'd his genial light
Upon the breast of Solon. Solon rais'd
Aloft the leafy rod, and thus began:—
'Ye beauteous offspring of Olympian Jove
And Memory divine, Pierian maids,
Hear me, propitious. In the morn of life,
When hope shone bright and all the prospect smil'd,
To your sequester'd mansion oft my steps
Were turn'd, O Muses, and within your gate
My offerings paid. Ye taught me then with strains
Of flowing harmony to soften War's
Dire voice; or in fair colours, that might charm
The public eye, to clothe the form austere
Of civil counsel. Now my feeble age
Neglected, and supplanted of the hope
On which it lean'd, yet sinks not; but to you,
To your mild wisdom flies, refuge belov'd
Of solitude and silence. Ye can teach
The visions of my bed whate'er the gods
In the rude ages of the world inspir'd,
Or the first heroes acted: ye can make
The morning light more gladsome to my sense
Than ever it appear'd to active youth
Pursuing careless pleasure: ye can give
To this long leisure, these unheeded hours,
A labour as sublime, as when the sons
Of Athens throng'd and speechless round me stood,
To hear pronounc'd for all their future deeds

The bounds of right and wrong. Celestial powers
I feel that ye are near me: and behold,
To meet your energy divine, I bring
A high and sacred theme; not less than those
Which to the' eternal custody of Fame
Your lips intrusted, when of old ye deign'd
With Orpheus or with Homer to frequent
The groves of Hæmus or the Chian shore.
'Ye know, harmonious maids, (for what of all
My various life was e'er from you estrang'd?)
Oft hath my solitary song to you
Reveal'd that duteous pride which turn'd my steps
To willing exile; earnest to withdraw
From envy and the disappointed thirst
Of lucre, lest the bold familiar strife,
Which in the eye of Athens they upheld
Against her legislator, should impair
With trivial doubt the reverence of his laws.
To Egypt therefore through the' Ægean isles
My course I steer'd, and by the banks of Nile
Dwelt in Canopus. Thence the hallow'd domes
Of Saïs, and the rites to Isis paid,
I sought; and in her temple's silent courts,
Through many changing moons, attentive heard
The venerable Sonchis, while his tongue
At morn or midnight the deep story told
Of her who represents whate'er has been,
Or is, or shall be; whose mysterious veil
No mortal hand hath ever yet remov'd.
By him exhorted, southward to the walls
Of On I pass'd, the city of the sun,
The ever-youthful god. 'Twas there amid
His priests and sages, who the live-long night
Watch the dread movements of the starry sphere,
Or who in wondrous fables half disclose

The secrets of the elements; 'twas there
That great Psenophis taught my raptur'd ears
The fame of old Atlantis, of her chiefs,
And her pure laws, the first which earth obey'd.
Deep in my bosom sunk the noble tale;
And often, while I listen'd, did my mind
Foretel with what delight her own free lyre
Should some time for an Attic audience raise
Anew that lofty scene, and from their tombs
Call forth those ancient demigods to speak
Of justice and the hidden providence
That walks among mankind. But yet meantime
The mystic pomp of Ammon's gloomy sons
Became less pleasing. With contempt I gaz'd
On that tame garb and those unvarying paths
To which the double yoke of king and priest
Had cramp'd the sullen race. At last, with hymns
Invoking our own Pallas and the gods
Of cheerful Greece, a glad farewell I gave
To Egypt, and before the southern wind
Spread my full sails. What climes I then survey'd,
What fortunes I encounter'd in the realm
Of Crœsus or upon the Cyprian shore,
The Muse, who prompts my bosom, doth not now
Consent that I reveal. But when, at length,
Ten times the sun returning from the south
Had strow'd with flowers the verdant earth, and
The groves with music, pleas'd I then beheld [fill'd
The term of those long errors drawing nigh.
"Nor yet (I said) will I sit down within
The walls of Athens, till my feet have trod
The Cretan soil, have pierc'd those reverend haunts
Whence law and civil concord issued forth
As from their ancient home, and still to Greece

Their wisest, loftiest discipline proclaim."
Straight where Amnisus, mart of wealthy ships,
Appears beneath fam'd Cnossus and her towers,
Like the fair handmaid of a stately queen,
I check'd my prow, and thence with eager steps
The city' of Minos enter'd. O ye gods,
Who taught the leaders of the simpler time
By written words to curb the' untoward will
Of mortals; how within that generous isle
Have ye the triumphs of your power display'd
Munificent! those splendid merchants, lords
Of traffic and the sea, with what delight
I saw them at their public meal, like sons
Of the same household, join the plainer sort
Whose wealth was only freedom! whence to these
Vile envy, and to those fantastic pride,
Alike was strange; but noble concord still
Cherish'd the strength untam'd, the rustic faith,
Of their first fathers. Then the growing race,
How pleasing to behold them in their schools,
Their sports, their labours, ever plac'd within,
O shade of Minos! thy controlling eye.
Here was a docile band in tuneful tones
Thy laws pronouncing, or with lofty hymns
Praising the bounteous gods; or, to preserve
Their country's heroes from oblivious night,
Resounding what the Muse inspir'd of old;
There, on the verge of manhood, others met,
In heavy armour through the heats of noon
To march, the rugged mountain's height to climb
With measur'd swiftness, from the hard-bent bow
To send resistless arrows to their mark,
Or for the fame of prowess to contend,
Now wrestling, now with fists and staves oppos'd,
Now with the biting falchion, and the fence

Of brazen shields; while still the warbling flute
Presided o'er the combat, breathing strains
Grave, solemn, soft; and changing headlong spite
To thoughtful resolution cool and clear.
Such I beheld those islanders renown'd,
So tutor'd from their birth to meet in war
Each bold invader, and in peace to guard
That living flame of reverence for their laws,
Which nor the storms of fortune, nor the flood
Of foreign wealth diffus'd o'er all the land,
Could quench or slacken. First of human names
In every Cretan's heart was Minos still;
And holiest far of what the sun surveys
Through his whole course, were those primeval seats
Which with religious footsteps he had taught
Their sires to' approach; the wild Dictæan cave
Where Jove was born; the ever-verdant meads
Of Ida, and the spacious grotto, where
His active youth he pass'd, and where his throne
Yet stands mysterious; whither Minos came
Each ninth-returning year, the king of gods
And mortals there in secret to consult
On justice, and the tables of his law
To' inscribe anew. Oft also with like zeal
Great Rhea's mansion from the Cnossian gates
Men visit; nor less oft the antique fane
Built on that sacred spot, along the banks
Of shady Theron, where benignant Jove
And his majestic consort join'd their hands
And spoke their nuptial vows. Alas, 'twas there
That the dire fame of Athens sunk in bonds
I first receiv'd; what time an annual feast
Had summon'd all the genial country round,
By sacrifice and pomp to bring to mind

That first great spousal; while the enamour'd youths
And virgins, with the priest before the shrine,
Observe the same pure ritual, and invoke
The same glad omens. There, among the crowd
Of strangers from those naval cities drawn,
Which deck, like gems, the island's northern shore,
A merchant of Ægina I descried,
My ancient host; but, forward as I sprung
To meet him, he, with dark dejected brow,
Stopp'd half-averse; and, 'O Athenian guest,
(He said) art thou in Crete, these joyful rites
Partaking? Know thy laws are blotted out:
Thy country kneels before a tyrant's throne.'
He added names of men, with hostile deeds
Disastrous; which obscure and indistinct
I heard: for, while he spake, my heart grew cold
And my eyes dim; the altars and their train
No more were present to me: how I far'd,
Or whither turn'd, I know not; nor recal
Aught of those moments other than the sense
Of one who struggles in oppressive sleep,
And, from the toils of some distressful dream
To break away, with palpitating heart,
Weak limbs, and temples bath'd in death-like dew,
Makes many a painful effort. When at last
The sun and Nature's face again appear'd,
Not far I found me; where the public path,
Winding through cypress groves and swelling meads
From Cnossus to the cave of Jove ascends.
Heedless I follow'd on, till soon the skirts
Of Ida rose before me, and the vault
Wide-opening pierc'd the mountain's rocky side.
Entering within the threshold, on the ground
I flung me, sad, faint, overworn with toil.

* * * * * * *

THE

BEGINNING

OF THE

FOURTH BOOK

OF THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

A FRAGMENT.

1770.

THE

PLEASURES

OF

IMAGINATION.

BOOK IV.

ɜɛ effort more, one cheerful sally more
ır destin'd course will finish; and in peace
hen, for an offering sacred to the powers
'ho lent us gracious guidance, we will then
scribe a monument of deathless praise.
my adventurous song! with steady speed
ıng hast thou, on an untried voyage bound,
il'd between earth and heaven: hast now sur
vey'd,
:etch'd out beneath thee, all the mazy tracts
passion and opinion; like a waste
sands and flowery lawns and tangling woods,
here mortals roam bewilder'd: and hast now
ulting soar'd among the worlds above,
hover'd near the' eternal gates of heaven,
ıaply the discourses of the gods,
:urious, but an unpresuming guest,
ou might'st partake, and carry back some strain

Of divine wisdom, lawful to repeat,
And apt to be conceiv'd of man below.
A different task remains; the secret paths
Of early genius to explore: to trace
Those haunts where Fancy her predestin'd sons,
Like to the demigods of old, doth nurse
Remote from eyes profane. Ye happy souls
Who now her tender discipline obey,
Where dwell ye? What wild river's brink at eve
Imprint your steps? What solemn groves at noon
Use ye to visit, often breaking forth
In rapture mid your dilatory walk,
Or musing, as in slumber, on the green?
—Would I again were with you! O ye dales
Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where,
Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides,
And his banks open, and his lawns extend,
Stops short the pleased traveller to view,
Presiding o'er the scene, some rustic tower
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands:
O ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook
The rocky pavement and the mossy falls
Of solitary Wensbeck's limpid stream;
How gladly I recal your well-known seats
Belov'd of old, and that delightful time
When all alone, for many a summer's day,
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led
In silence by some powerful hand unseen.
Nor will I e'er forget you; nor shall e'er
The graver tasks of manhood, or the' advice
Of vulgar wisdom, move me to disclaim
Those studies which possess'd me in the dawn
Of life, and fix'd the colour of my mind
For every future year: whence even now

From sleep I rescue the clear hours of morn,
And, while the world around lies overwhelm'd
In idle darkness, am alive to thoughts
Of honourable fame, of truth divine
Or moral, and of minds to virtues won
By the sweet magic of harmonious verse;
The themes which now expect us. For thus far
On general habits, and on arts which grow
Spontaneous in the minds of all mankind,
Hath dwelt our argument; and how self-taught,
Though seldom conscious of their own employ,
In Nature's or in Fortune's changeful scene
Men learn to judge of beauty, and acquire
Those forms set up, as idols in the soul,
For love and zealous praise. Yet indistinct,
In vulgar bosoms, and unnotic'd lie
These pleasing stores, unless the casual force
Of things external prompt the heedless mind
To recognise her wealth. But some there are
Conscious of Nature, and the rule which man
O'er nature holds: some who, within themselves
Retiring from the trivial scenes of chance
And momentary passion, can at will
Call up these fair exemplars of the mind;
Review their features; scan the secret laws
Which bind them to each other; and display
By forms, or sounds, or colours, to the sense
Of all the world their latent charms display:
Ev'n as in Nature's frame, (if such a word,
If such a word, so bold, may from the lips
Of man proceed) as in this outward frame
Of things, the great Artificer portrays
His own immense idea. Various names
These among mortals bear, as various signs

They use, and by peculiar organs speak
To human sense. There are who by the flight
Of air through tubes with moving stops distinct,
Or by extended chords in measure taught
To vibrate, can assemble powerful sounds,
Expressing every temper of the mind
From every cause, and charming all the soul
With passion void of care. Others, meantime,
The rugged mass of metal, wood, or stone,
Patiently taming; or with easier hand
Describing lines, and with more ample scope
Uniting colours; can to general sight
Produce those permanent and perfect forms,
Those characters of heroes and of gods,
Which from the crude materials of the world
Their own high minds created. But the chief
Are poets; eloquent men, who dwell on earth
To clothe whate'er the soul admires or loves
With language and with numbers. Hence to these
A field is open'd wide as Nature's sphere;
Nay, wider: various as the sudden acts
Of human wit, and vast as the demands
Of human will. The bard nor length, nor depth,
Nor place, nor form controls. To eyes, to ears,
To every organ of the copious mind,
He offereth all its treasures. Him the hours,
The seasons him obey; and changeful time
Sees him at will keep measure with his flight,
At will outstrip it. To enhance his toil,
He summoneth from the' uttermost extent
Of things which God hath taught him every form
Auxiliar, every power; and all beside
Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand
Gives, to corporeal essence, life and sense

And every stately function of the soul.
The soul itself to him obsequious lies,
Like matter's passive heap; and as he wills,
To reason and affection he assigns
Their just alliances, their just degrees:
Whence his peculiar honours: whence the race
Of men who people his delightful world,
Men genuine and according to themselves,
Transcend as far as the' uncertain sons of earth,
As earth itself to his delightful world
The palm of spotless beauty doth resign.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

AN

EPISTLE TO CURIO.*

ε has the spring beheld thy faded fame,
ıe fourth winter rises on thy shame,
l exulting grasp'd the votive shell,
nds of triumph all thy praise to tell;
l could my skill through ages make thee shine,
roud to mix my memory with thine.
ıw the cause that wak'd my song before,
ɔraise, with triumph, crowns the toil no more.
he glorious man, whose faithful cares,
ıell'd by malice, nor relax'd by years,
v'd ambition's wild audacious hate,
ragg'd at length corruption to her fate;
ry tongue its large applauses ow'd,
ell-earn'd laurels every Muse bestow'd;
lic justice urg'd the high reward,
eedom smil'd on the devoted bard:
en, to him whose levity or lust
l a people's generous hopes in dust;

io was a young Roman senator of distinguished birth and
who, upon his first entrance into the forum, had been
ted to the care of Cicero. Being profuse and extrava-
soon dissipated a large and splendid fortune: to supply
t of which, he was driven to the necessity of abetting the
of Cæsar against the liberties of his country, although
before been a professed enemy to him.—Cicero exerted
with great energy to prevent his ruin, but without effect;
became one of the first victims in the civil war. This
was first published in the year 1744, when a celebrated
(Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath) after a long, and at
ceasful opposition to an unpopular minister, had deserted
e of his country, and became the foremost in support and
of the same measures he had so steadily and for such a
f time contended against. It was altered by the author
'Ode to Curio;' but the original poem is too curious to
tod.

Who taught ambition firmer heights of power,
And sav'd corruption at her hopeless hour:
Does not each tongue its execrations owe?
Shall not each Muse a wreath of shame bestow?
And public justice sanctify the' award?
And freedom's hand protect the' impartial bard?
  Yet long reluctant I forbore thy name,
Long watch'd thy virtue like a dying flame,
Hung o'er each glimmering spark with anxious eyes,
And wish'd and hop'd the light again would rise.
But since thy guilt still more entire appears,
Since no art hides, no supposition clears;
Since vengeful slander now too sinks her blast,
And the first rage of party-hate is pass'd;
Calm as the judge of truth, at length I come
To weigh thy merits, and pronounce thy doom;
So may my trust from all reproach be free;
And earth and time confirm the fair decree.
  There are who say, they view'd without amaze
Thy sad reverse of all thy former praise;
That through the pageants of a patriot's name,
They pierc'd the foulness of thy secret aim;
Or deem'd thy arm exalted but to throw
The public thunder on a private foe.
But I, whose soul consented to thy cause,
Who felt thy genius stamp its own applause,
Who saw the spirits of each glorious age
Move in thy bosom, and direct thy rage;
I scorn'd the' ungenerous gloss of slavish minds,
The owl-eyed race, whom virtue's lustre blinds.
Spite of the learned in the ways of vice,
And all who prove that 'each man has his price,'
I still believ'd thy end was just and free;
And yet, e'en yet believe it—spite of thee.

E'en though thy mouth impure has dar'd disclaim,
Urg'd by the wretched impotence of shame,
Whatever filial cares thy zeal has paid
To laws infirm, and liberty decay'd;
Has begg'd ambition to forgive the show;
Has told corruption thou wert ne'er her foe;
Has boasted in thy country's awful ear,
Her gross delusion when she held thee dear;
How tame she follow'd thy tempestuous call,
And heard thy pompous tales, and trusted all—
Rise from your sad abodes, ye curs'd of old,
For laws subverted, and for cities sold!
Paint all the noblest trophies of your guilt,
The oaths you perjur'd, and the blood you spilt;
Yet must you one untempted vileness own,
One dreadful palm reserv'd for him alone:
With studied arts his country's praise to spurn,
To beg the infamy he did not earn,
To challenge hate when honour was his due,
And plead his crimes where all his virtue knew.
Do robes of state the guarded heart enclose
From each fair feeling human nature knows?
Can pompous titles stun the' enchanted ear
To all that reason, all that sense would hear?
Else could'st thou e'er desert thy sacred post,
In such unthankful baseness to be lost?
Else could'st thou wed the emptiness of vice,
And yield thy glories at an idiot's price?
When they who, loud for liberty and laws,
In doubtful times had fought their country's cause,
When now of conquest and dominion sure,
They sought alone to hold their fruits secure;
When taught by these, oppression hid the face,
To leave corruption stronger in her place,

By silent spells to work the public fate,
And taint the vitals of the passive state,
Till healing wisdom should avail no more,
And freedom loath to tread the poison'd shore;
Then like some guardian-god that flies to save
The weary pilgrim from an instant grave,
Whom, sleeping and secure, the guileful snake
Steals near and nearer through the peaceful brake
Then Curio rose to ward the public woe,
To wake the heedless, and incite the slow,
Against corruption liberty to arm,
And quell the' enchantress by a mightier charm.
  Swift o'er the land the fair contagion flew,
And with thy country's hopes thy honours grew.
Thee, patriot, the patrician roof confess'd:
Thy powerful voice the rescued merchant bless'd
Of thee with awe the rural hearth resounds;
The bowl to thee the grateful sailor crowns;
Touch'd in the sighing shade with manlier fires,
To trace thy steps the lovesick youth aspires;
The learn'd recluse, who oft amaz'd had read
Of Grecian heroes, Roman patriots dead,
With new amazement hears a living name
Pretend to share in such forgotten fame;
And he who scorning courts and courtly ways,
Left the same tract of these dejected days,
The life of nobler ages to renew
In virtues sacred from a monarch's view;
Rous'd by thy labours from the bless'd retreat,
Where social ease and public passions meet,
Again ascending treads the civil scene,
To act and be a man, as thou hadst been.
  Thus by degrees thy cause superior grew,
And the great end appear'd at last in view

We heard the people in thy hopes rejoice,
We saw the senate bending to thy voice. [reign
The friends of freedom hail'd the' approaching
Of laws for which our fathers bled in vain;
While venal faction, struck with new dismay,
Shrunk at the frown, and self-abandon'd lay.
Wak'd in the shock the public genius rose,
Abash'd and keener from his long repose;
Sublime in ancient pride, he rais'd the spear
Which slaves and tyrants long were wont to fear.
The city felt his call: from man to man,
From street to street, the glorious horror ran;
Each crowded haunt was stirr'd beneath his power,
And, murmuring, challeng'd the deciding hour.
  Lo! the deciding hour at last appears:
The hour of every freeman's hopes and fears!
Thou, genius! guardian of the Roman name,
O ever prompt tyrannic rage to tame!
Instruct the mighty moments as they roll,
And guide each moment steady to the goal.
Ye spirits by whose providential art
Succeeding motives turn the changeful heart,
Keep, keep the best in view to Curio's mind,
And watch his fancy, and his passions bind!
Ye shades immortal, who by freedom led,
Or in the field or on the scaffold bled,
Bend from your radiant seats a joyful eye,
And view the crown of all your labours nigh.
See freedom mounting her eternal throne!
The sword submitted, and the laws her own:
See! public power chastis'd beneath her stands,
With eyes intent, and uncorrupted hands!
See private life by wisest arts reclaim'd!
See ardent youth to noblest manners fram'd!

See us acquire whate'er was sought by you,
If Curio, only Curio will be true.
'Twas then—O shame! O trust how ill repaid!
O Latium, oft by faithless sons betray'd!—
'Twas then—What frenzy on thy reason stole?
What spells unsinew'd thy determin'd soul?
—Is this the man in freedom's cause approv'd?
The man so great, so honour'd, so belov'd?
This patient slave by tinsel chains allur'd?
This wretched suitor for a boon abjur'd?
This Curio, hated and despis'd by all?
Who fell himself to work his country's fall?
O lost, alike to action and repose!
Unknown, unpitied in the worst of woes!
With all that conscious, undissembled pride,
Sold to the insults of a foe defied!
With all that habit of familiar fame,
Doom'd to exhaust the dregs of life in shame!
The sole sad refuge of thy baffled art,
To act a statesman's dull, exploded part,
Renounce the praise no longer in thy power,
Display thy virtue, though without a dower,
Contemn the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,
And shut thy eyes that others may be blind.
—Forgive me, Romans, that I bear to smile,
When shameless mouths your majesty defile,
Paint you a thoughtless, frantic, headlong crew,
And cast their own impieties on you.
For witness, Freedom, to whose sacred power,
My soul was vow'd from reason's earliest hour,
How have I stood exulting, to survey
My country's virtues, opening in thy ray?
How! with the sons of every foreign shore
The more I match'd them, honour'd her's the more

O race erect! whose native strength of soul
Which kings, nor priests, nor sordid laws control,
Bursts the tame round of animal affairs,
And seeks a noble centre for its cares;
Intent the laws of life to comprehend,
And fix dominion's limits by its end:
Who, bold and equal in their love or hate,
By conscious reason judging every state,
The man forget not, though in rags he lies,
And know the mortal through a crown's disguise:
Thence prompt alike with witty scorn to view
Fastidious grandeur lift his solemn brow,
Or, all awake at pity's soft command,
Bend the mild ear, and stretch the gracious hand.
Thence large of heart, from envy far remov'd,
When public toils to virtue stand approv'd,
Not the young lover fonder to admire,
Not more indulgent the delighted sire:
Yet high and jealous of their free-born name,
Fierce as the flight of Jove's destroying flame,
Where'er oppression works her wanton sway,
Proud to confront, and dreadful to repay.
But if to purchase Curio's sage applause,
My country must with him renounce her cause;
Quit with a slave the part a patriot trod,
Bow the meek knee, and kiss the regal rod;
Then still, ye powers, instruct his tongue to rail,
Nor let his zeal, nor let his subject fail:
Else, ere he change the style, bear me away
To where the Gracchi,* where the Bruti stay!

* The two brothers, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, lost their lives in attempting to introduce the only regulation that could give stability and good order to the Roman republic. L. Junius Brutus founded the commonwealth, and died in its defence.

O long rever'd, and late resign'd to shame!
If this uncourtly page thy notice claim,
When the loud cares of business are withdrawn,
Nor well-dress'd beggars round thy footsteps fawn
In that still, thoughtful, solitary hour,
When truth exerts her unresisted power,
Breaks the false optics ting'd with fortune's glare
Unlocks the breast, and lays the passions bare:
Then turn thy eyes on that important scene,
And ask thyself—if all be well within.
Where is the heartfelt worth and weight of soul,
Which labour could not stop, nor fear control?
Where the known dignity, the stamp of awe,
Which, half abash'd, the proud and venal saw?
Where the calm triumphs of an honest cause?
Where the delightful taste of just applause?
Where the strong reason, the commanding tongue
On which the senate fir'd or trembling hung?
All vanish'd, all are sold—and in their room,
Couch'd in thy bosom's deep, distracted gloom,
See the pale form of barbarous grandeur dwell,
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell!
To her in chains thy dignity was led;
At her polluted shrine thy honour bled;
With blasted weeds thy awful brow she crown'd,
Thy powerful tongue with poison'd philters bound
That baffled reason straight indignant flew,
And fair persuasion from her seat withdrew.
For now no longer truth supports thy cause;
No longer glory prompts thee to applause;
No longer virtue breathing in thy breast,
With all her conscious majesty confess'd,
Still bright and brighter wakes the' almighty flame
To rouse the feeble, and the wilful name;

And where she sees the catching glimpses roll,
Spreads the strong blaze, and all involves the soul;
But cold restraints thy conscious fancy chill,
And formal passions mock thy struggling will:
Or, if thy genius e'er forget his chain,
And reach impatient at a nobler strain,
Soon the sad bodings of contemptuous mirth [birth,
Shoot through thy breast, and stab the generous
Till, blind with smart, from truth to frenzy toss'd,
And all the tenor of thy reason lost;
Perhaps thy anguish drains a real tear;
While some with pity, some with laughter hear.
—Can art, alas! or genius, guide the head,
Where truth or freedom from the heart are fled?
Can lesser wheels repeat their native stroke,
When the prime function of the soul is broke?
But come, unhappy man! thy fates impend;
Come, quit thy friends, if yet thou hast a friend;
Turn from the poor rewards of guilt like thine,
Renounce thy titles, and thy robes resign;
For see the hand of destiny display'd
To shut thee from the joys thou hast betray'd!
See the dire fane of infamy arise!
Dark as the grave, and spacious as the skies;
Where, from the first of time, thy kindred train,
The chiefs and princes of the' unjust remain.
Eternal barriers guard the pathless road,
To warn the wanderer of the curs'd abode;
But prone as whirlwinds scour the passive sky,
The heights surmounted, down the steep they fly.
There, black with frowns, relentless time awaits,
And goads their footsteps to the guilty gates:
And still he asks them of their unknown aims,
Evolves their secrets, and their guilt proclaims;

And still his hands despoil them on the road,
Of each vain wreath, by lying bards bestow'd;
Break their proud marbles, crush their festal cars,
And rend the lawless trophies of their wars.
At last the gates his potent voice obey;
Fierce to their dark abode he drives his prey;
Where, ever arm'd with adamantine chains,
The watchful demon o'er her vassal reigns,
O'er mighty names and giant-powers of lust,
The great, the sage, the happy, and august.*
No gleam of hope their baleful mansion cheers,
No sound of honour hails their unbless'd ears;
But dire reproaches from the friend betray'd,
The childless sire and violated maid;
But vengeful vows for guardian laws effac'd,
From towns enslav'd, and continents laid waste:
But long posterity's united groan,
And the sad charge of horrors not their own,
For ever through the trembling space resound,
And sink each impious forehead to the ground.
Ye mighty foes of liberty and rest,
Give way, do homage to a mightier guest!
Ye daring spirits of the Roman race,
See Curio's toil your proudest claims efface!
—Aw'd at the name, fierce Appius† rising bends,
And hardy Cinna from his throne attends:
'He comes, (they cry) to whom the fates assign'd
With surer arts to work what we design'd,
From year to year the stubborn herd to sway,
Mouth all their wrongs, and all their rage obey;

* Titles which have been generally ascribed to the most pernicious of men.

† Appius Claudius the Decemvir, and L. Cornelius Cinna, both attempted to establish a tyrannical dominion in Rome, and both perished by the treason.

Till own'd their guide, and trusted with their power,
He mock'd their hopes in one decisive hour:
Then, tir'd and yielding, led them to the chain,
And quench'd the spirit we provok'd in vain.'
But thou, Supreme, by whose eternal hands
Fair Liberty's heroic empire stands;
Whose thunders the rebellious deep control,
And quell the triumphs of the traitor's soul,
O turn this dreadful omen far away!
On Freedom's foes their own attempts repay:
Relume her sacred fire so near suppress'd,
And fix her shrine in every Roman breast:
Though bold corruption boast around the land,
'Let virtue, if she can, my baits withstand?'
Though bolder now she urge the' accursed claim,
Gay with her trophies rais'd on Curio's shame;
Yet some there are who scorn her impious mirth,
Who know what conscience and a heart are worth.
—O Friend and Father of the human mind,
Whose arts for noblest ends our frame design'd!
If I, though fated to the studious shade
Which party-strife, nor anxious power invade,
If I aspire in public virtue's cause,
To guide the Muses by sublimer laws,
Do thou her own authority impart,
And give my numbers entrance to the heart.
Perhaps the verse might rouse her smother'd flame,
And snatch the fainting patriot back to fame:
Perhaps by worthy thoughts of human kind,
To worthy deeds exalt the conscious mind;
Or dash corruption in her proud career,
And teach her slaves that vice was born to fear.

HYMN

TO

THE NAIADS.

1747.

ARGUMENT.

The Nymphs, who preside over springs and rivulets, are addressed at day-break, in honour of their several functions, and of the relations which they bear to the natural and to the moral world. Their origin is deduced from the first allegorical deities, or powers of nature; according to the doctrine of the old mythological poets, concerning the generation of the gods and the rise of things. They are then successively considered, as giving motion to the air and exciting summer breezes; as nourishing and beautifying the vegetable creation; as contributing to the fulness of navigable rivers, and consequently to the maintenance of commerce; and by that means, to the maritime part of military power Next is represented their favourable influence upon health, when assisted by rural exercise: which introduces their connection with the art of physic, and the happy effects of mineral medicinal springs. Lastly, they are celebrated for the friendship which the Muses bear them, and for the true inspiration which temperance only can receive: in opposition to the enthusiasm of the more licentious poets.

O'er yonder eastern hill the twilight pale
Walks forth from darkness; and the god of day,
With bright Astræa seated by his side,
Waits yet to leave the ocean. Tarry, nymphs,

Ye nymphs, ye blue-ey'd progeny of Thames,
Who now the mazes of this rugged heath
Trace with your fleeting steps: who all night long
Repeat, amid the cool and tranquil air,
Your lonely murmurs, tarry: and receive
My offer'd lay. To pay you homage due,
I leave the gates of sleep; nor shall my lyre
Too far into the splendid hours of morn
Engage your audience: my observant hand
Shall close the strain ere any sultry beam
Approach you. To your subterranean haunts
Ye then may timely steal; to pace with care
The humid sands; to loosen from the soil
The bubbling sources; to direct the rills
To meet in wider channels; or beneath
Some grotto's dripping arch, at height of noon
To slumber, shelter'd from the burning heaven.
Where shall my song begin, ye Nymphs? or end?
Wide is your praise and copious—First of things,
First of the lonely powers, ere Time arose,
Were Love and Chaos.* Love, the sire of Fate;†

* Hesiod, in his Theogony, gives a different account, and makes Chaos the eldest of beings; though he assigns to Love neither father nor superior; which circumstance is particularly mentioned by Phædrus in Plato's Banquet, as being observable not only in Hesiod, but in all other writers both of verse and prose: and on the same occasion he cites a line from Parmenides, in which love is expressly styled the eldest of all the gods. Yet Aristophanes, in The Birds, affirms, that 'Chaos, and Night, and Erebus, and Tartarus, were first; and that Love was produced from an egg, which the sable-winged Night deposited in the immense bosom of Erebus.' But it must be observed, that the Love designed by this comic poet was always distinguished from the other; from that original and self-existent being the ΤΟ ΟΝ or ΑΓΑΘΟΝ of Plato, and meant only the ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΣ, or second person of the old Grecian trinity; to whom is in-

Elder than Chaos. Born of Fate was Time,‡
Who many sons and many comely births

scribed an hymn among those which pass under the name of Orpheus, where he is called Protogonos, or the first begotten, is said to have been born of an egg, and is represented as the principal or origin of all these external appearances of nature. In the fragments of Orpheus, collected by Henry Stephens, he is named Phanes, the discoverer or discloser; who unfolded the ideas of the supreme intelligence, and exposed them to the perception of inferior beings in this visible frame of the world; as Macrobius, and Proclus, and Athenagoras all agree to interpret the several passages of Orpheus which they have preserved.

But the Love designed in our text, is the one self-existent and infinite mind, whom if the generality of ancient mythologists have not introduced or truly described, in accounting for the production of the world and its appearances, yet, to a modern poet it can be no objection that he hath ventured to differ from them in this particular: though, in other respects, he professeth to imitate their manner and conform to their opinions. For, in these great points of natural theology, they differ no less remarkably among themselves; and are perpetually confounding the philosophical relations of things with the traditionary circumstances of mythic history; upon which very account, Callimachus, in his hymn to Jupiter, declareth his dissent from them concerning even an article of the national creed; adding, that the ancient bards were by no means to be depended on. And yet in the exordium of the old Argonautic poem, ascribed to Orpheus, it is said, that 'Love, whom mortals in later times call Phanes, was the father of the eternally-begotten Night,' who is generally represented by these mythological poets, as being herself the parent of all things; and who, in the Indigitamenta, or Orphic Hymns, is said to be the same with Cypris, or Love itself. Moreover, in the body of this Argonautic poem, where the personated Orpheus introduceth himself singing to his lyre in reply to Chiron, he celebrateth 'the obscure memory of Chaos, and the natures which it contained within itself in a state of perpetual vicissitude; how the heaven had its boundary determined; the generation of the earth; the depth of the ocean; and also the sapient Love, the most ancient, the self-sufficient; with all the beings which he produced when he separated one thing from another.' Which noble passage is more directly to Aristotle's purpose in the first book of his metaphysics than any

Devour'd, relentless father :§ till the child
Of Rhea‖ drove him from the upper sky,¶

of those which he has there quoted to show that the ancient poets and mythologists agreed with Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the other more sober philosophers, in that natural anticipation and common notion of mankind concerning the necessity of mind and reason to account for the connection, motion, and good order of the world. For, though neither this poem, nor the hymns which pass under the same name, are, it should seem, the the work of the real Orpheus; yet, beyond all question, they are very ancient. The hymns, more particularly, are allowed to be older than the invasion of Greece by Xerxes; and were probably a set of public and solemn forms of devotion: as appears by a passage in one of them, which Demosthenes hath almost literally cited in his first oration against Aristogiton, as the saying of Orpheus, the founder of their most holy mysteries. On this account, they are of higher authority than any other mythological work now extant, the Theogony of Hesiod himself not excepted. The poetry of them is always extremely noble; and the mysterious air which prevails in them, together with its delightful impression upon the mind, cannot be better expressed than in that remarkable description with which they inspired the German editor Eschenbach, when he accidentally met with them at Leipsic. 'Thesaurum me reperisse credidi, (says he) et profecto thesaurum reperi. Incredibile dictu quo me sacro horrore afflaverint indigitamenta ista deorum: nam et tempus ad illorum lectionem eligere cogebar, quod vel solum horrorem incutere animo potest, nocturnum; cum enim totam diem consumserim in contemplando urbis splendore, et in adeundis, quibus scatet urbs illa, viris doctis: sola nox restabat, quam Orpheo consecrare potui. In abyssum quendam mysteriorum venerandæ antiquitatis descendere videbar, quotiescunque silente mundo, solis vigilantibus astris et luna, μελαμπτφαις istos hymnos ad manus sumsi.

Chaos is the unformed, undigested mass of Moses and Plato; which Milton calls

'The womb of nature.'

† Fate is the universal system of natural causes; the work of the Omnipotent Mind, or of Love: so Minucius Felix: 'Quid enim aliud est fatum, quam quod de unoquoque nostrum deus fatus est.' So also Cicero, in The First Book on Divination: 'Fatum autem id appello, quod Græci ΕΙΡΜΑΡΜΕΝΗΝ; id est, ordinem seriemque causarum, cum causa causæ nexa rem

And quell'd his deadly might. Then social reign'd
The kindred powers, Tethys, and reverend Ops,
And spotless Vesta;* while supreme of sway

ex se gignat—ex quo intelligitur, ut fatum sit non id quod superstitiose, sed id quod physice dicitur causa æterna rerum.' To the same purpose is the doctrine of Hierocles, in that excellent fragment concerning Providence and Destiny. As to the three Fates, or Destinies of the poets, they represented that part of the general system of natural causes which relates to man, and to other mortal beings: for so we are told in the hymn addressed to them among the Orphic Indigitamenta, where they are called the daughters of Night, (or Love,) and, contrary to the vulgar notion, are distinguished by the epithets of gentle, and tender-hearted. According to Hesiod, Theog. ver. 904, they were the daughters of Jupiter and Themis; but in the Orphic Hymn to Venus, or Love, that Goddess is directly styled the mother of Necessity; and is represented, immediately after, as governing the three Destinies, and conducting the whole system of natural causes.

‡ Cronus, Saturn, or Time, was, according to Apollodorus, the son of Cælum and Tellus. But the author of the hymns gives it quite undisguised by mythological language, and calls him plainly the offspring of the earth and the starry heaven; that is, of Fate, as explained in the preceding note.

§ The known fable of Saturn devouring his children, was certainly meant to imply the dissolution of natural bodies; which are produced and destroyed by time.

‖ Jupiter, so called by Pindar.

¶ That Jupiter dethroned his father Saturn, is recorded by all the mythologists. Phurnutus, or Cornutus, the author of a little Greek treatise on the nature of the gods, informs us, that by Jupiter was meant the vegetable soul of the world, which restrained and prevented those uncertain alterations which Saturn, or Time, used formerly to cause in the mundane system.

* Our mythology here supposeth, that before the establishment of the vital, vegetative, plastic nature (represented by Jupiter) the four elements were in a variable and unsettled condition; but afterwards well-disposed and at peace among themselves. Tethys was the wife of the Ocean; Ops, or Rhea, the Earth; Vesta, the eldest daughter of Saturn, Fire; and the

Remain'd the cloud-compeller. From the couch
Of Tethys sprang the sedgy-crowned race,*
Who from a thousand urns, o'er every clime,
Send tribute to their parent; and from them
Are ye, O Naiads:† Arethusa fair,
And tuneful Aganippe; that sweet name,
Bandusia; that soft family which dwelt
With Syrian Daphne;‡ and the honour'd tribes
Belov'd of Paeon.§ Listen to my strain,
Daughters of Tethys: listen to your praise.
You, Nymphs, the winged offspring,‖ which of old

cloud-compeller, or Ζευς νεφελαγερετης, the Air: though he also represented the plastic principle of Nature, as may be seen in the Orphic hymn inscribed to him

* The river gods; who, according to Hesiod's Theogony, were the sons of Oceanus and Tethys

† The descent of the Naiads is less certain than most points of the Greek mythology. Homer, Odyss. xiii. Νηγενεες. Virgil, in the eighth book of the Æneid, speaks as if the Nymphs, or Naiads, were the parents of the rivers: but in this he contradicts the testimony of Hesiod, and evidently departs from the orthodox system, which represents the several nymphs as retaining to every single river On the other hand, Callimachus, who was very learned in all the school divinity of those times, in his hymn to Delos, maketh Peneus the great Thessalian river god, the father of his nymphs; and Ovid, in the fourteenth book of his Metamorphoses, mentions the Naiads of Latium as the immediate daughters of the neighbouring river gods. Accordingly, the Naiads of particular rivers are occasionally, both by Ovid and Statius, called by a patronymic, from the name of the river to which they belong.

‡ The grove of Daphne, in Syria, near Antioch, was famous for its delightful fountains.

§ Mineral and medicinal springs. Paeon was the physician of the gods

‖ The winds; who, according to Hesiod and Apollodorus, were the sons of Astræus and Aurora.

Aurora to divine Astræus bore,
Owns; and your aid beseecheth. When the might
Of Hyperion,* from his noontide throne,
Unbends their languid pinions, aid from you
They ask; Favonius and the mild South-west
From you relief implore. Your sallying streams†
Fresh vigour to their weary wings impart.
Again they fly, disporting; from the mead
Half ripen'd and the tender blades of corn,
To sweep the noxious mildew; or dispel
Contagious steams, which oft the parched earth
Breathes on her fainting sons. From noon to eve,
Along the river and the paved brook,
Ascend the cheerful breezes: hail'd of bards
Who, fast by learned Cam, the' Æolian lyre
Solicit: nor unwelcome to the youth
Who on the heights of Tiber, all inclin'd
O'er rushing Anio, with a pious hand
The revered scene delineates, broken fanes,
Or tombs, or pillar'd aqueducts, the pomp
Of ancient Time: and haply, while he scans
The ruins, with a silent tear revolves
The fame and fortune of imperious Rome.
You too, O Nymphs, and your unenvious aid

* A son of Cœlum and Tellus, and father of the Sun, who is thence called, by Pindar, Hyperionides. But Hyperion is put by Homer in the same manner as here, for the Sun himself.

† The state of the atmosphere, with respect to rest and motion, is, in several ways, affected by rivers and running streams; and that more especially in hot seasons: first, they destroy its equilibrium, by cooling those parts of it with which they are in contact: and, secondly, they communicate their own motion: and the air which is thus moved by them, being left heated, is of consequence more elastic than other parts of the atmosphere, and therefore fitter to preserve and to propagate that motion.

The rural powers confess, and still prepare
For you their choicest treasures. Pan commands,
Oft as the Delian king* with Sirius holds
The central heavens, the father of the grove
Commands his Dryads over your abodes
To spread their deepest umbrage. Well the god
Remembereth how indulgent ye supplied
Your genial dews to nurse them in their prime.
  Pales, the pasture's queen, where'er ye stray,
Pursues your steps delighted; and the path
With living verdure clothes. Around your haunts
The laughing Chloris,† with profusest hand,
Throws wide her blooms, her odours. Still with you
Pomona seeks to dwell: and o'er the lawns,
And o'er the vale of Richmond, where with Thames
Ye love to wander, Amalthea‡ pours

* One of the epithets of Apollo, or the Sun, in the Orphic hymn inscribed to him.

† The ancient Greek name for Flora.

‡ The mother of the first Bacchus, whose birth and education was written, as Diodorus Siculus informs us, in the old Pelasgic character, by Thymœtes, grandson to Laomedon, and contemporary with Orpheus. Thymœtes had travelled over Libya to the country which borders on the western ocean: there he saw the island of Nysa, and learned from the inhabitants that 'Ammon, king of Libya, was married in former ages to Rhea, sister of Saturn and the Titans: that he afterwards fell in love with a beautiful virgin, whose name was Amalthea: had by her a son, and gave her possession of a neighbouring tract of land, wonderfully fertile; which in shape nearly resembling the horn of an ox, was thence called the Hesperian horn, and afterwards the horn of Amalthea: that, fearing the jealousy of Rhea, he concealed the young Bacchus, with his mother, in the island of Nysa;' the beauty of which. Diodorus describes with great dignity and pomp of style. This fable is one of the noblest in all the ancient mythology, and seems to have made a particular impression on the imagination of Milton; the only modern poet (unless perhaps it be necessary to except Spenser) who, in these mysterious tra-

Well-pleas'd the wealth of that Ammonian horn,
Her dower; unmindful of the fragrant isles
Nysæan or Atlantic. Nor canst thou,
(Albeit oft, ungrateful, thou dost mock,
The beverage of the sober Naiad's urn,
O Bromius, O Lenæan,) nor canst thou
Disown the powers whose bounty, ill repaid,
With nectar feeds thy tendrils. Yet from me
Yet, blameless Nymphs, from my delighted lyre,
Accept the rites your bounty well may claim;
Nor heed the scoffings of the' Edonian band.*
For better praise awaits you. Thames, your sire,
As down the verdant slope your duteous rills
Descend, the tribute stately Thames receives,
Delighted; and your piety applauds:
And bids his copious tide roll on secure,
For faithful are his daughters; and with words
Auspicious gratulates the bark which, now
His banks forsaking her adventurous wings
Yields to the breeze, with Albion's happy gifts
Extremest isles to bless. And oft at morn,
When Hermes,† from Olympus bent o'er earth

ditions of the poetic story, had a heart to feel and words to express, the simple and solitary genius of antiquity. To raise the idea of his Paradise, he prefers it even to

——— 'that Nysean isle
Girt by the river Triton, where old Cham,
(Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove,)
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son.
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye,'

* The priestesses and other ministers of Bacchus; so called from Edonus, a mountain of Thrace, where his rites were celebrated.

† Hermes, or Mercury, was the patron of Commerce; in which benevolent character he is addressed by the author of the Indigitamenta in these beautiful lines:

Ἑρμῆν ὠνήλιον, κεδνεπιφρε, λυσιμηρίμνε,
Ὃς χείρεσθιν ἔχεις κερνὴς ὅπλον ἀμιμήτης.

To bear the words of Jove, on yonder hill
Stoops lightly sailing; oft intent your springs
He views: and waving o'er some new-born stream
His blest pacific wand, 'And yet (he cries)
Yet, (cries the son of Maia) though recluse
And silent be your stores; from you, fair Nymphs,
Flows wealth and kind society to men.
By you my function and my honour'd name
Do I possess; while o'er the Bœtic vale,
Or through the towers of Memphis, or the palms
By sacred Ganges water'd, I conduct
The English merchant; with the buxom fleece
Of fertile Ariconium while I clothe
Sarmatian kings; or to the household gods
Of Syria, from the bleak Cornubian shore,
Dispense the mineral treasure which of old
Sidonian pilots sought,* when this fair land
Was yet unconscious of those generous arts
Which wise Phœnicia from their native clime
Transplanted to a more indulgent haven.'

Such are the words of Hermes! such the praise,
O Naiads, which from tongues celestial waits
Your bounteous deeds. From bounty issueth power:
And those who, sedulous in prudent works,
Relieve the wants of nature, Jove repays
With noble wealth, and his own seat on earth,
Fit judgments to pronounce, and curb the might
Of wicked men. Your kind unfailing urns
Not vainly to the hospitable arts
Of Hermes yield their store. For, O ye Nymphs,
Hath he not won the' unconquerable queen†

* The merchants of Sidon and Tyre made frequent voyages to the coast of Cornwall, from whence they carried home great quantities of tin.

† Mercury, the patron of commerce, being so greatly dependent on the good offices of the Naiads, in return obtains for

Of arms to court your friendship? You, she owns
The fair associates who extend her sway
Wide o'er the mighty deep; and grateful things
Of you she uttereth, oft as from the shore
Of Thames, or Medway's vale, or the green banks
Of Vecta, she her thundering navy leads
To Calpè's* foaming channel, or the rough
Cantabrian* surge; her auspices divine
Imparting to the senate and the prince
Of Albion, to dismay barbaric kings,
The' Iberian, or the Celt. The pride of kings
Was ever scorn'd by Pallas; and of old
Rejoic'd the virgin, from the brazen prow
Of Athens o'er Ægina's gloomy surge†
To drive her clouds and storms; o'erwhelming all
The Persian's promis'd glory, when the realms
Of Indus and the soft Ionian clime,
When Libya's torrid champain and the rocks
Of cold Imaüs join'd their servile bands
To sweep the sons of liberty from earth.
In vain! Minerva on the bounding prow
Of Athens stood, and with the thunder's voice
Denounc'd her terrors on their impious heads,
And shook her burning ægis. Xerxes saw‡

them the friendship of Minerva, the goddess of war: for military power, at least the naval part of it, hath constantly followed the establishment of trade; which exemplifies the preceding observation, that 'from bounty issueth power.'

* Gibraltar and the Bay of Biscay.

† Near this island, the Athenians obtained the victory of Salamis over the Persian navy.

‡ This circumstance is recorded in that passage, perhaps the most splendid among all the remains of ancient history, where Plutarch, in his Life of Themistocles, describes the sea fights of Artemisium and Salamis.

From Heracléum, on the mountain's height
Thron'd in his golden car; he knew the sign
Celestial; felt unrighteous hope forsake
His faltering heart, and turn'd his face with shame.
  Hail, ye who share the stern Minerva's power;
Who arm the hand of Liberty for war:
And give to the renown'd Britannic name
To awe contending monarchs: yet benign,
Yet mild of nature: to the works of peace
More prone, and lenient of the many ills
Which wait on human life. Your gentle aid
Hygeia well can witness; she who saves
From poisonous cates and cups of pleasing bane,
The wretch devoted to the' entangling snares
Of Bacchus and of Comus. Him she leads
To Cynthia's lonely haunts. To spread the toils,
To beat the coverts, with the jovial horn
At dawn of day to summon the loud hounds,
She calls the lingering sluggard from his dreams:
And where his breast may drink the mountain [breeze,
And where the fervor of the sunny vale
May beat upon his brow, through devious paths
Beckons his rapid courser. Nor when ease,
Cool ease and welcome slumbers have becalm'd
His eager bosom, does the queen of health
Her pleasing care withhold. His decent board
She guards, presiding; and the frugal powers
With joy sedate leads in: and while the brown
Ennæan dame with Pan presents her stores;
While changing still, and comely in the change,
Vertumnus and the Hours before him spread
The garden's banquet; you to crown his feast,
To crown his feasts, O Naiads, you the fair

Hygeia calls: and from your shelving seats,
And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring,
To slake his veins: till soon a purer tide
Flows down those loaded channels; washeth off
The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds
Of crude disease; and through the' abodes of life
Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail, Naiads: hail,
Who give to labour, health; to stooping age
The joys which youth had squander'd. Oft your urns
Will I invoke; and frequent in your praise,
Abash the frantic thyrsus* with my song.
For not estrang'd from your benignant arts
Is he, the god, to whose mysterious shrine
My youth was sacred, and my votive cares
Belong; the learned Pæon. Oft when all
His cordial treasures he hath search'd in vain;
When herbs, and potent trees, and drops of balm
Rich with the genial influence of the sun,
(To rouse dark fancy from her plaintive dreams,
To brace the nerveless arm, with food to win
Sick appetite, or hush the' unquiet breast
Which pines with silent passion) he in vain
Hath prov'd; to your deep mansions he descends.
Your gates of humid rock, your dim arcades,
He entereth; where impurpled veins of ore
Gleam on the roof; where through the rigid mine
Your trickling rills insinuate. There the god
From your indulgent hands the streaming bowl
Wafts to his pale-eyed suppliants; wafts the seeds
Metallic and the elemental salts [soon
Wash'd from the pregnant glebe. They drink: and
Flies pain: flies inauspicious care: and soon

* A staff, or spear wreathed round with ivy: of constant use in the bacchanalian mysteries.

The social haunt or unfrequented shade
Hears 'Io, Io Pæan;'* as of old,
When Python fell. And, O propitious Nymphs,
Oft as for hapless mortals I implore
Your salutary springs, through every urn
Oh shed your healing treasures. With the first
And finest breath, which from the genial strife
Of mineral fermentation springs, like light
O'er the fresh morning's vapours, lustrate then
The fountain, and inform the rising wave.
My lyre shall pay your bounty. Scorn not ye
That humble tribute. Though a mortal hand
Excite the strings to utterance, yet for themes
Not unregarded of celestial powers,
I frame their language; and the Muses deign
To guide the pious tenor of my lay.
The Muses (sacred by their gifts divine)
In early days did to my wondering sense
Their secrets oft reveal: oft my rais'd ear
In slumber felt their music: oft at noon
Or hour of sun-set, by some lonely stream,
In field or shady grove they taught me words
Of power, from death and envy to preserve [mind,
The good man's name: whence yet with grateful
And offerings unprofan'd by ruder eye,
My vows I send, my homage, to the seats
Of rocky Cirrha,† where with you they dwell:
Where you, their chaste companions, they admit
Through all the hallow'd scene: where oft intent,

* An exclamation of victory and triumph, derived from Apollo's encounter with Python.

† One of the summits of Parnassus, and sacred to Apollo. Near it were several fountains, said to be frequented by the Muses. Nysa, the other eminence of the same mountain was dedicated to Bacchus.

And leaning o'er Castalia's mossy verge,
They mark the cadence of your confluent urns,
How tuneful, yielding gratefullest repose
To their consorted measure: till again,
With emulation all the sounding choir,
And bright Apollo, leader of the song,
Their voices through the liquid air exalt,
And sweep their lofty strings: those powerful strings
That charm the mind of gods:* that fill the courts
Of wide Olympus with oblivion sweet
Of evils, with immortal rest from cares;
Assuage the terrors of the throne of Jove;
And quench the formidable thunderbolt
Of unrelenting fire. With slacken'd wings,
While now the solemn concert breathes around,
Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord
Sleeps the stern eagle; by the number'd notes,
Possess'd; and satiate with the melting tone:
Sovereign of birds! The furious god of war,
His darts forgetting, and the winged wheels
That bear him vengeful o'er the' embattled plain,
Relents, and soothes his own fierce heart to ease,
Most welcome ease. The Sire of gods and men,
In that great moment of divine delight,
Looks down on all that live; and whatsoe'er
He loves not, o'er the peopled earth and o'er
The interminated ocean, he beholds
Curs'd with abhorrence by his doom severe,
And troubled at the sound. Ye, Naiads, ye
With ravish'd ears the melody attend
Worthy of sacred silence. But the slaves

* This whole passage, concerning the effects of sacred music among the gods, is taken from Pindar's first Pythian ode.

Of Bacchus with tempestuous clamours strive
To drown the heavenly strains; of highest Jove,
Irreverent; and by mad presumption fir'd
Their own discordant raptures to advance
With hostile emulation. Down they rush
From Nysa's vine-impurpled cliff, the dames
Of Thrace, the Satyrs, and the' unruly Fauns,
With old Silenus, reeling through the crowd
Which gambols round him, in convulsions wild
Tossing their limbs, and brandishing in air
The ivy-mantled thyrsus, or the torch [pipe's*
Through black smoke flaming, to the Phrygian
Shrill voice, and to the clashing cymbals, mix'd
With shrieks and frantic uproar. May the gods
From every unpolluted ear avert
Their orgies! If within the seats of men,
Within the walls, the gates, where Pallas holds
The guardian key,† if haply there be found
Who loves to mingle with the revel-band
And hearken to their accents; who aspires
From such instructors to inform his breast
With verse; let him, fit votarist, implore
Their inspiration. He perchance the gifts
Of young Lyæus, and the dread exploits,
May sing in aptest numbers: he the fate
Of sober Pentheus,‡ he the Paphian rites,

* The Phrygian music was fantastic and turbulent, and fit to excite disorderly passions.

† It was the office of Minerva to be the guardian of walled cities; whence she was named ΠΟΛΙΑΣ and ΠΟΛΙΟΥΧΟΣ, and had her statutes placed in their gates, being supposed to keep the keys; and on that account styled ΚΛΗΔΟΥΧΟΣ.

‡ Pentheus was torn in pieces by the bacchanalian priests and women, for despising their mysteries.

And naked Mars with Cytherea chain'd,
And strong Alcides in the spinster's robes,
May celebrate, applauded. But with you,
O Naïads, far from that unhallow'd route,
Must dwell the man whoe'er to praised themes
Invokes the' immortal Muse :—the' immortal Mus
To your calm habitations, to the cave
Corycian* or the Delphic mount,† will guide
His footsteps; and with your unsullied streams
His lips will bathe : whether the' eternal lore
Of Themis, or the majesty of Jove,
To mortals he reveal; or teach his lyre
The' unenvied guerdon of the patriot's toils,
In those unfading islands of the bless'd,
Where sacred bards abide. Hail, honour'd Nymphs
Thrice hail! For You the Cyrenaïc shell‡

* Of this cave Pausanias, in his tenth book, gives the following description: 'Between Delphi and the eminences of Parnassus, is a road to the grotto of Corycium, which has its name from the nymph Corycia, and is by far the most remarkable which I have seen. One may walk a great way into it without a torch. It is of a considerable height, and hath several springs within it; and yet a much greater quantity of water distils from the shell and roof, so as to be continually dropping on the ground. The people round Parnassus hold it sacred to the Corycian nymphs and to Pan.'

† Delphi, the seat and oracle of Apollo, had a mountainous and rocky situation on the skirts of Parnassus.

‡ Cyrene was the native country of Callimachus, whose hymns are the most remarkable example of that mythological passion which is assumed in the preceding poem, and have always afforded particular pleasure to the author of it, by reason of the mysterious solemnity with which they affect the mind. On this account he was induced to attempt somewhat in the same manner; solely by way of exercise; the manner itself being now almost entirely abandoned in poetry. And as the mere genealogy, or the personal adventures of heathen gods, could have been but little interesting to a modern reader; it was therefore thought

ıld, I touch, revering. To my songs
resent ye with favourable feet,
all profaner audience far remove.

er to select some convenient part of the history of nature, o employ these ancient divinities, as it is probable they first employed; to wit, in personifying natural causes, and presenting the mutual agreement or opposition of the cor- ıl and moral powers of the world; which hath been account- e very highest office of poetry.

SELECT POEMS

OF

JOHN GILBERT COOPER;

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

THE LIFE

OF

JOHN GILBERT COOPER.

'OOPER was born in 1723. He descended, ac-
ɔrding to the account of his life in the Biographia
ritannica, from an ancient family in Nottingham-
ıire, impoverished on account of its loyalty during
ıe rebellion in Charles Ist's time. Thurgaton Priory,
that county, was granted to one of his ancestors by
enry VIII. and after some interruption became the
ɜsidence of our poet's father, and still continues in
ıe family. He was educated at Westminster school,
nder Dr. John Nichols; and in 1743, became a
ɔmmoner of Trinity college, Cambridge, where
ɜ resided two or three years, without taking a de-
ɜce, but not without a due attention to his studies.
'ith some tincture of foppery, he was a young
an of very lively parts, and attached to classical
arning. He quitted the university on his mar-
ıge with Susanna, the granddaughter of Sir Na-
an Wright, Lord Keeper.

In 1745, Cooper published *The Power of Harmo-*
, in two books, in which he endeavoured to re-
mmend a constant attention to what is perfect
d beautiful in nature, as the means of harmoniz-
g the soul to a responsive regularity and sympa-
etic order. This imitation of the language of the
ıaftesbury school was not affectation. He had
ıdied the works of that nobleman with enthu-
ısm, and seems entirely to have regulated his
nduct by the maxims of the ancient and modern

academies. The poem brought him into notice with the public, but he appears not at this time to have courted the fame of authorship. When Dodsley began to publish his *Museum*, he invited the aid of Mr. Cooper among others who were friendly to him, and received a greater portion of assistance from Cooper's pen than from that of any other individual. His contributions, with only one or two exceptions, were prose essays on subjects of common life and manners, in which he discovers a very happy vein, chaste humour, and sprightly observation. In 1749, he published with his name, *The Life of Socrates*, collected from all the ancient authorities; in this work he received many learned notes from the sturdy antagonist of Warburton, the reverend John Jackson of Leicester, a controversial divine of considerable fame in his day. These notes were principally levelled at Warburton, and in language not very respectful. Warburton, who knew Jackson, but probably little of Cooper, retorted by a note, in his edition of Pope's works, on the Essay on Criticism, in which he accused the author of the Life of Socrates of impudent abuse and slander, the offspring of ignorance joined with vanity. Cooper's vanity, it must be confessed, is amply displayed in this work, and it is impossible to justify his affected contempt for writers of established reputation. Warburton's rebuke, however, was very coarse, and appears to have alarmed him for he was not naturally of an abusive turn, but on the contrary, rather prided himself on a mind superior to personal animosities. In his defence therefore, he published *Remarks on Warburton's Edition of Pope*, in which he avers that he had attacked him as an author and not as a man, and not, as a fair antagonist, deserve to be called an impudent slanderer. He next examines a few Warburton's notes on Pope, and endeavours to prove his incapacity as a commentator. He

trays, however, that the real cause of his introducing Warburton's name into the Life of Socrates, was his want of veneration for Mr. Cooper's favourite philosophers, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, &c. The whole is written with much acrimony, but with a very considerable display of learning. In the former, at least, there is reason to think he was assisted by Jackson: but the Life of Socrates brought very little reputation to its author; and after some years, Warburton's angry note was omitted from the editions of Pope.

In 1754, he appeared to more advantage as the author of *Letters on Taste*, a small volume, which soon passed through three or four editions. Taste had not at that time been treated in a philosophical manner; and as the author set out with liberal professions, his readers were induced to take for granted that he had thrown much new light on the subject. He is, however, original only in the manner in which he has contrived to throw a charm over a few acknowledged truths and common place opinions. Instead of beginning by definition, and proceeding gradually to analyze the pleasure resulting from what are generally considered as the objects of true taste, he lets loose his imagination, invites his reader into fairy land, and delights him by excursive remarks and allegorical details, in a style which even Johnson, who had no great opinion of Cooper, allowed to be splendid and spirited. In 1755, he published *The Tomb of Shakspeare*, a vision; and when *The World* was set up by Dodsley and Moore, he contributed two papers, which, with those he published in the Museum, afford a proof that in this species of writing, he might have attained considerable fame, if he had avowed his productions.

In 1756, he appears to have caught the alarm, very general at that time among the enemies of administration, lest the Hessian troops, brought into

the country to defend the kingdom from invasio
should be instrumental in subverting its libertie
Mr. Cooper was no politician, but he was a poe
and he determined to contribute his share of war
ing, in a poem entitled, *The Genius of Britain*, a
dressed to Mr. Pitt. In 1758, he published *Epi
tles to the Great, from Aristippus in Retirement*, an
soon after, *The Call of Aristippus*, addressed to D
Akenside, in a style of adulation pardonable onl
to the warmest feelings of friendship.

Some other of his minor pieces were publishe
about this time; and in 1759, his translation
Gresset's *Ver Vert*, a mock heroic poem, in fo
cantos. In 1764, all, with the exception of the V
Vert and The Estimate of Life were published
one volume by Dodsley, whom he allowed to tal
that liberty, and who informs us, that they we
originally written for the author's amusement, a
afterwards published for the bookseller's profit.
this has the appearance of vanity, it may at least l
pardoned for its liberality. It does not appear th
he even sold any of his works, and during the pu
lication of the Museum he was an indefatigable co
tributor.

At this time, he had probably taken leave
the Muses, and was applying himself to the acti
and useful duties of a magistrate. He reside
however, occasionally in London, and was a co
stant attendant and frequent speaker at the Soci
ty for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactur
and Commerce. Of this he had unsuccessfully e
deavoured to become a Vice President, and felt l
disappointment so keenly as to retire in disgust.
He died at his house in May Fair, after a long a
excruciating illness, occasioned by the stone, Ap
14, 1769, in the forty-sixth year of his age. I
Kippis, who knew him personally, mentions th
he was a gentleman of polite address and acco
plishments; and, if the general tenor of his wor

may be credited, he possessed an amiable and affectionate heart. There are few of the minor poets who have higher claims to originality. The epistles to Aristippus, his Songs, and the Father's advise to his Son, although of unequal merit, contain many passages that are truly poetical. His veneration for some of the French poets, particularly Gresset, induced him to attempt a mode of versification in the Epistles, to which the English ear cannot easily become familiar, and which is not to be justified from any defect in the manliness or copiousness of the English language. Yet this study of the French writers, of no use in other respects, has rendered his translation of the Ver Vert almost a perfect copy of the original.

The prevailing fault in all his pieces, and which he learned from adopting the careless versification borrowed from the French, is a licentious use of the elision, as in the words om'nous, foll'wing, and many others; his rhymes also are frequently defective.

EPISTLES

TO HIS

FRIENDS IN TOWN;

FROM ARISTIPPUS, IN RETIREMENT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The species of poetry, in which the following Epistles are written, has been used with great success among the French, by Chapelle, Chaulieu, La Fare, Gresset, Madame Deshouliéres, and others; but I do not remember to have seen it before in the English language. The unconfined return of the rhymes and easiness of the diction, seem peculiarly adapted to epistolary compositions. The author professedly imitates the general manner of the above-mentioned writers, but he is more particularly obliged to Gresset, for two or three hints in his performance, which he has acknowledged in the marginal notes. The reader will not forget, that these four Epistles were written originally under a fictitious character.

EPISTLE I.

THE RETREAT OF ARISTIPPUS.

To his Grace the Duke of ********

'Je vous livre mes rêveries
Que quelques verités hardies,
Viennent librement mélanger.'
GRESSET.

Seiz'd with the rage of being great
In courts, my lord, let others lead
(Exchanging happiness for state)
The crowd of tinsel'd slaves, who tread
The miry ministerial road
To modern honour's dark abode,
Where dwell the' high vulgar of the town,
Which England's common courtesy,
To make bad fellowship go down,
Politely calls good company.
Remote from politics and strife,
From the dull sons of business free,
Unfetter'd by domestic life,
To letter'd ease a votary,
I spend alternately my hours
'Twixt Epicurus' myrtle bow'rs
And Academus' palmy grove;
Happy, from Seine's meandering shores,
Where polish'd pleasures ever rove,
The first to bring the Thespian maids,
To play, to science, and to love,
On Cyprian pipes in British shades.

No levees here attend his grace,
My lording every morn an ass,
Nor office clerks with busy face,
To make fools wonder as they pass,
Whisper dull nothings in his ear,
'Bout some rogue borough-monger there.
The well-bred insipidity
Of town assemblies ne'er is heard,
And candidates for prelacy,
That sable, supple, bowing herd,
This silent territory fly;
For bishoprics are seldom found
In realms of scientific ground.
No doctor's medicinal wig,
No titled beggar's suppliant knee,
No alderman with knighthood big
And newly purchas'd pedigree,
No vultures of the human race
From Temple or from Lincoln's-Inn,
No pseudo-patriot out of place,
Nor venal senator that's in,
Disturb this amiable retreat;
Only a muse, a love, or grace,
In this calm senate have a seat.
Such representatives are free!
No muse has lately been at court,
Nor are the graces better for't;
Nor have the loves septennially,
A borough-interest to support,
Mortgag'd their healths or property.
Led by unerring nature's voice,
I haunt retirement's silent shade,
Contentment's humble lot and choice,
Where, on the mossy sofa laid,

I see, through contemplation's eye,
The white-wing'd cherub innocence,
Each blessing of her native sky
To sympathetic hearts dispense.
Here, undebauch'd by spurious art,
Great nature reigns in every part,
Both when refulgent Titan's beam
In high meridian splendour glows,
And when pale Cynthia's maiden gleam
O'er night a silver mantle throws.
The natives of the neighbouring grove
Their nuptials chaunt on vernal sprays;
Untaught by Ovid how to love,
True passion modulates their lays.
From no Propertius' polish'd strain
The linnet forms her temperate note:
From no Tibullus learns to plain
The widow'd turtle's faithful throat.
Each feather'd libertine of air,
Gay as Catullus, loves and sings:
Free as the Teian sage from care,
The goldfinch claps his gilded wings,
And wooes his female to repair
To shady groves and crystal springs.
Here bless'd with freedom and content,
Untaught by devious thought to stray
Through fancy's visionary way,
These sylvan bards of sentiment
Warble the dictates of the heart
Uninterrupted as they flow,
Unmeasur'd by the rules of art,
Now strongly high, now sweetly low.
  Such scenes the good have ever lov'd,
The great have sought, the wise approv'd.

Here legislators plan'd of old
The pandects of immortal laws;
And mighty chiefs and heroes bold,
Withdrawn from popular applause,
First having left their countries free
From savage and from human pests,
Gain'd a more glorious victory
O'er the fierce tyrants of their breasts.
  Methinks, I hear some courtier say,
'Such charms ideal ill agree
With moderniz'd gentility;
For now the witty, great, and gay,
Think what so charms your rural sense,
Only a clown's fit residence.
In former days a country life,
For so time-honour'd poets sing,
Free from anxiety and strife,
Was blandish'd by perpetual spring.
There the sweet graces kept their court,
The nymphs, the fauns, and dryads play'd,
Thither the Muses would resort,
Apollo lov'd the sylvan shade.
The gods and heroes own'd a passion
For wives and daughters of the swains,
And heroines, whilst 'twas the fashion,
Ridotto'd on the rural plains.
The 'squires were then of heavenly race,
The parsons fashionable too,
Young Hermes had at court a place,
Venus and Mars were folks one knew.
But long, long since, those times are o'er;
No goddess trips it o'er the lea,
The gods and heroes are no more,
Who danc'd to rural minstrelsy;

Detested are these sad abodes
By modern dames of mortal make,
And peers who rank not with such gods,
Their solitary seats forsake.
For now 'tis quite another case,
The country wears a different face.
When sometimes (oh! the cruel Lent!)
Thither her ladyship is sent,
As Sol through Taurus mounts the sky,
Or George prorogues his parliament,
Her beauteous bosom heaves a sigh,
Five months in rustic banishment.
Thither, alas! no Viscounts rove,
Nor heart-bewitching Col'nels come,
Dull is the music of the grove,
Unheeded fades the meadow's bloom.
The verdant copse may take the birds,
The breath of morn and evening's dew
To bleating flocks and lowing herds
Be pleasant, and be wholesome too;
But how can these ('tis out of nature)
Have charms for any human creature!'
Such are the sentiments, I own,
Of all that lazy loitering race,
Form daily ushers to his grace,
Who never leave the guilty town;
But in the purlieus of the court,
By knaves are spaniel'd up and down,
To fetch and carry each report.
Far other images arise
To those who inward turn their eyes
To view the' inhabitants of mind;
Where solitude's calm votaries find
Of knowledge the' inexhausted prize:

And truth, immortal truth, bestows,
Clad in ethereal robes of light,
Pure as the flakes of falling snows,
Unenvied, unreprov'd delight.
  On me, my lord, on humble me
The intellectual train attends;
Science oft seeks my company,
And fancy's children are my friends.
Here, bless'd with independent ease,
I look with pity on the great,
For who, that with enjoyment sees
The laughs and graces at his gate,
And little loves attending nigh,
Or fondly hovering o'er his head,
To wing his orders through the sky,
Whilst warbling Muses round him shed
Sweet flowers, which on Parnassus blow,
Would wish these stormy paths to tread,
Which slaves and courtiers only know.
Thanks to my ancestors and Heav'n!
To me the happier lot is giv'n,
In calm retreat my time to spend
With far far better company,
Than those who on the court attend
In honourable drudgery.
Warriors and statesmen of old Rome
Duly observe my levee day,
And wits from polish'd Athens come,
Occasional devoirs to pay.
With me great Plato often holds
Discourse upon immortal pow'rs,
And Attic Xenophon unfolds
Rich honey from Lycéum's flow'rs;

Cæsar and Tully often dine,
Anacreon rambles in my grove,
Sweet Horace drinks Falernian wine,
Catullus makes, on haycocks, love.
With these, and some akin to these,
The living few who grace our days,
I live in literary ease;
My chief delight their taste to please
With soft and unaffected lays.
Thus, to each votary's wish, kind fate
Divides the world with equal line:
She bids ambition, care and state,
Be the high portion of the great,
Peace, friendship, love, and bliss be mine.

EPISTLE II.

THE TEMPER OF ARISTIPPUS.

To Lady *******.

Quo me cunque rapit Tempestas deferor hospes.
HORAT.

I've oft, Melissa, heard you say,
'The world observes I never wear
An aspect gloomy or severe;
That, constitutionally gay,
Whether dark clouds obscure the sky,
Or Phœbus gilds the face of day,
In pleasure's true philosophy
I pass the winged years away.'

In most, 'tis true, the human sense
Is subjected to smiles or tears,
To swelling pride, or trembling fears,
'By every skyey influence.'
Cameleon-like, their souls agree
With all they hear and all they see;
Or, as one instrument resounds
Another's unison of sounds,
Their mutable complexions carry
The looks of anger, hope, and joy;
Just as the scenes around 'em vary,
Pleasures delight, or pains annoy.
But I, by philosophic mood,
Let the wise call it—happy folly,
Educe, from every evil, good,
And rapture, e'en from melancholy.
When in the silent midnight grove
Sweet Philomela swells her throat
With tremulous and plaintive note,
Expressive of disastrous love;
I with the pensive pleasures dwell,
And in their calm sequester'd cell
Listen with rapturous delight
To the soft songster of the night.
Here Echo, in her mossy cave,
Symphonious to the love-lorn song,
Warbles the vocal rocks among;
Whilst gently-trickling waters lave
The oak-fring'd mountain's hoary brow,
Whose streams, united in the vale,
O'er pebbled beds loquacious flow,
Tun'd to the sad melodious tale
In murmurs querulously slow.

And, whilst immers'd in thought I lie,
From ages past and realms unseen,
There moves before the mental eye
The pleasing melancholy scene
Of nymphs and youths unfortunate,
Whose fame shall spread from shore to shore,
Preserv'd by bards from death and fate,
Till time itself shall be no more.
  Thus, not by black misanthropy
Impell'd, to caves or rocks I fly;
But when, by chance or humour led,
My wandering feet those regions tread,
Taught by philosophy so sweet
To shun the fellowship of care,
Far from the world I go to meet
Such pleasures as inhabit there.
  With rebel will I ne'er oppose
The current of my destiny,
But, pliant as the torrent flows,
Receive my course implicitly.
As, from some shaded river's side
If chance a tender* osier's blown,
Subject to the controlling tide,
The' obedient shrub is carried down.
Awhile it floats upon the streams,
By whirlpools now is forc'd below,
Then mounts again where Titan's beams
Upon the shining waters glow:
Sweet flowery vales it passes by,
Cities and solitudes by turns,
Or where a dreary desert burns
In sorrowful obscurity,

* See the Chartreuse of Gresset, from whence this passage is imitated; but the subsequent particular application to Aristippus is the author's.

For many a league the wanderer's borne,
By forest, wood, mead, mountain, plain,
Till, carried never to return,
'Tis buried in the boundless main.
Thus Aristippus forms his plan:
To every change of time and fates
His temper he accommodates;
Not where he will, but where he can,
A daily bliss he celebrates.
An osier on the stream of time,
This philosophic wanderer
Floating through every place and clime,
Finds some peculiar blessing there;
Where'er the winding current strays,
By prosperous mount or adverse plain,
He'll sport, till all his jocund days
Are lost in life's eternal main.
  Let worldlings hunt for happiness
With pain, anxiety, and strife,
Through every thorny path of life,
And ne'er the' ideal fair possess.
For who, alas! their passions send
The fleeting image to pursue,
Themselves their own designs undo,
And in the means destroy the end.
But I a surer clue have found,
To guide me o'er the mazy ground;
For, knowing that this deity
Must ever rove at liberty
Through fancy's visionary road,
I never wisdom's schemes employ
To find her in one fix'd abode,
But where I meet her I enjoy;
And, being free from strife and care,
Am sure to meet her every where.

EPISTLE III.

THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIPPUS.

To *********, *Esq.*

D'autres font des vers par étude;
J'en fais pour me desennuyer.
GRESSET.

SHOULD supercilious censors say—
'His youth is waning, 'tis not time
For Aristippus now, with rhyme
To wile the useless hours away;'
I might reply, I do no more
Than what my betters did before;
That what at first my fancy led
This idle business to pursue,
Still makes me prosecute the trade,
Because I've nothing else to do.
But to the candid, Tom, and you,
A better reason I could give,
To whom a better reason's due;
That in these measures I convey
My gentle precepts, how to live,
Clearer than any other way,
For in the powers of poetry
Wit, truth, and pleasure blended lie
As, in Italia's fertile vales,
On the same tree, whilst blossoms blow,
The ripen'd fruits nectareous grow,
Fed by warm suns and freshening gales..

Divinest art to mortals giv'n!
By thee, the brave, the good, the wise,
The fair, the learn'd, and witty rise,
From earth's dull sod, and people heav'n.
Nor be't to thee imputed blame,
That ever-barking calumny,
And filthy-mouth'd obscenity,
Have oft usurp'd thy injur'd name:
Alas! the drops which morning sheds
With dewy fingers on the meads,
The pink's and violet's tubes to fill,
Alike the noxious juices feed
Of deadly hemlock's poisonous weed,
And give 'em fatal power to kill!
  Imagination loves to trace
Reason's immortal lineaments
In fiction's necromantic face,
When probability assents.
The fairest features fiction wears,
When most like truth the' enchantress looks,
As sweet Narcissa's shade appears,
In silent lakes and crystal brooks,
So like the life, we scarcely know
Where last to fix our wavering love;
Whether upon the form below,
Or on the real nymph above.
In each we see an angel's face,
Though for the substance breathe our sighs,
Whilst we the shadowy image trace
In the clear wave, with longing eyes.
  But should you ask me, why I choose,
Of all the laurel'd sisterhood,
The' inhabitants of Pindus' wood
The least considerable muse?

The violets round the mountain's feet,
Whose humble gems unheeded blow,
Are to the shepherd's smell more sweet
Than lofty cedars on its brow.
Let the loud epic sound the' alarms
Of dreadful war, and heroes sprung
From some immortal ancestry,
Clad in impenetrable arms
By Vulcan forg'd; my lyre is strung
With softer chords, my muse more free
Wanders through Pindar's humbler ways
In amiable simplicity:
Unstudied are her gentle lays,
She asks no laurel for her brows:
Careless of censure or of praise,
She haunts where tender myrtle grows;
Fonder of happiness than fame;
To the proud bay prefers the rose,
Nor barters pleasure for a name.
On nature's lap reclin'd at ease,
I listen to her heavenly tongue,
From her derive the power to please,
From her receive the' harmonious time,
And what the goddess makes my song,
In unpremeditated rhyme
Melliflous flows, whilst young desire,
Cull'd from the' Elysian bloom of spring,
Strews flowers immortal round my lyre,
And fancy's sportive children bring,
From blossom'd grove and lilied mead,
Fresh fragrant chaplets for my head.
The most, though softest of the Nine,
Euterpe, muse of gaiety,
Queen of heart-softening melody,
Allures my ear with notes divine.

In my retreat Euterpe plays,
Where science, garlanded with flow'rs,
Enraptur'd listens to her lays,
Beneath the shade of myrtle bow'rs.
  This pleasing territory lies
Unvisited by common eyes,
Far from the prude's affected spleen,
Or bigot's surly godliness,
Where no coquettes, no jilts are seen,
Nor folly-fetter'd fops of dress;
Far from the vulgar, high and low,
The pension'd great man's littleness;
Or those who, prone to slavery, grow
Fit tools of other's tyranny,
And, with a blind devotion, bow
To wooden blocks of quality;
Far from the land of argument,
Where, deep within their murky cells,
Figures and blotted tropes are pent,*
And three-legg'd syllogism dwells;
Far from the bubble-blowing race,
The schoolmen subtle and refin'd,
Who fill the thick skull's brainless space
With puffs of theologic wind;
And all the grave pedantic train,
Which fairy-genius longs to bind
Hard with a comment's iron chain.
But, whilst such drones are driven away,
In my belov'd retreat remain
The fair, the witty, and the gay.
  Here the soft patriarch of the loves,
Honey'd Anacreon, with the doves

* See *Les Ombres* of Gresset.

Of Venus fluttering o'er his head
(Whilst ivy-crowned hours around
The laughter-loving graces lead
In sportive ringlets to the sound
Of Paphian flutes,) the muse invites
To festive days and amorous nights.
Here tender Moschus loves to rove
Along the meadow's daisied side,
Under a cool and silent grove,
Where brooks of dimpling waters glide.
Rapt in celestial ectasy,
Sappho, whom all the Nine inspire,
Varies her amorous melody,
The chords of whose Idalian lyre,
As changeful passions ebb or flow,
Struck with bold hand, now vibrate high,
Now, modulated to a sigh,
Tremble most languishingly low.
  Horace, mild sage, refin'd with ease,
Whose precepts, whilst they counsel, please,
Without the jargon of the schools,
And fur-gown'd pedant's bookish rules,
Here keeps his lov'd academy;
His art so nicely he conceals,
That wisdom on the bosom steals,
And men grow good insensibly.
From cool Valclusa's lilied meads
Soft Petrarch and his Laura come,
And e'en great Tasso sometimes treads
These flowery walks, and culls the bloom
Of rural groves, where heretofore
Each muse, each grace, beneath the shade
Of myrtle bowers, in secret play'd
With an Idalian paramour.

From silver Seine's transparent streams,
With roses and with lilies crown'd,
Breathing the same heart-easing themes,
And tun'd in amicable sound,
Sweet bards, of kindred spirit, blow
Soft Lydian notes on Gallic reeds,
Whose songs instruct us how to know
Truth's flowers from affectation's weeds.
Chapelle leads up the festive band;
La Farre and Chaulieu, hand in hand,
Close follow their poetic sire,
Hot with the Teian grape and fire.
But hark! as sweet as western wind
Breathes from the violets' fragrant beds,
When balmy dews Aurora sheds,
Gresset's clear pipe, distinct behind,
Symphoniously combines in one
Each former bard's mellifluent tone.
Gresset! in whose harmonious verse
The Indian bird shall never die,
Though death may perch on Ver-Vert's hearse,
Fame's tongue immortal shall rehearse
His variable loquacity.
Nor wanting are there bards of Thames:
On rural reed young Surrey plays;
And Waller woos the courtly dames
With gay and unaffected lays,
His careless limbs supinely laid
Beneath the plantain's leafy shade:
Prior his easy pipe applies
To sooth his jealous Chloe's breast,
And even Sacharissa's eyes
To brighter Chloe's yield the prize
Of Venus' soul-bewitching cest.

Than these much greater bards, I ween,
Whenever they will condescend
The' inferior muses to attend,
Immortalize this humble scene;
Shakspeare's and Drayton's fairy crews
In midnight revels gambol round,
And Pope's light sylphids sprinkle dews
Refreshing, on the magic ground.
Nor 'sdains the dryad-train of yore,
And green-hair'd naïads of the flood,
To join with fancy's younger brood,
Which brood the sweet enchantress bore
To British bards in after times,
Whose fame shall bloom in deathless rhymes,
When Greece and Britain are no more.
  Whilst such the feasts of fancy give,
Careless of what dull sages know,
Amidst their banquets I will live,
And, pitying, look on power below.
If still the Cynic censor says,
That Aristippus' useless days
Pass in melodious foolery,
This is my last apology:
'Whatever has the power to bless,
By living having learnt to prize,
Since wisdom will afford me less
Than what from harmless follies rise;
I cannot spare from happiness
A single moment to be wise.'

EPISTLE IV.

THE CALL OF ARISTIPPUS.

To Mark Akenside, M. D.

ΑΧΑΡΙΣ ΔΕ ΤΙΣ ΠΕΦΥΚΩΣ
ΜΕΘΕΤΩ ΠΟΙΗΜΑ———
HENR. STEPHENI.

Θ Thou, for whom the British bays
Bloom in these unpoetic days,
Whose early genius glow'd to follow
The arts, through nature's ancient ways;
Twofold disciple of Apollo!
Shall Aristippus' easy lays,
Trifles of philosophic pleasure
Compos'd in literary leisure,
Aspire to gain thy deathless praise?
If thy nice ear attends the strains
This careless bard of nature breathes
On Cyprian flute in Albion's plains;
By future poets myrtle wreaths
Shall long be scatter'd o'er his urn,
In annual solemnity,
And marble Cupids, as they mourn,
Point where his kindred ashes lie.
Whilst through the track of endless day
Thy muse shall, like the bird of Jove,
Wing to the source of light her way,
And bring from cloudless realms above,

Where truth's seraphic daughters glow,
Another Promethean ray
To this benighted globe below;
Mine, like soft Cytherea's dove,
Contented with her native grove,
Shall fondly sooth the' attentive ears
Of life's way-wearied travellers;
And from the paths of fancied woes,
Lead 'em to that serene abode,
Where real bliss and real good
In sweet security repose:
Or, as the lark with matin-notes,
To youth's new voyagers, in spring,
As over head in air she floats,
Attendant on unruffled wing,
Warbles inartificial joy,
My muse in tender strains shall sing
The feats of Venus' winged boy,
Or how the nimble-footed hours,
With the three graces knit in dance,
Follow the goddess Elegance
To Hebe's court in Paphian bow'rs.
  Nor let the supercilious wise,
And gloomy sons of melancholy,
These unaffected lays despise,
As day-dreams of melodious folly:
Reason a lovelier aspect wears,
The smiles and muses when between,
Than in the Stoic's rigid mien
With beard philosophiz'd by years;
And virtue mopes not in the cell
Where cloister'd pride and penance dwell,
But, in the chariot of the loves,
She triumphs innocently gay,
Drawn by the yok'd Idalian doves,

Whilst young affections lead the way
To warm the regions of the heart,
Whence selfish fiends of vice depart,
Like spectres at the' approach of day.
  Should any infidel demand,
Who sneers at our poetic heaven,
Whether from ordination given
By prelates of the Thespian land,
Or inspiration from above,
(As modern Methodists derive
Their light from no divine alive)
I hold the great prerogative
To' interpret sage Anacreon's writ,
Or gloss upon Catullus' wit;
Prophets that heretofore were sent,
And finally require to see
Credentials of my embassy,
Before his faith could yield consent,
Convincing reasons I would give
From a short tale scarce credible,
(But yet as true and plausible
As some which Catholics believe)
That I was call'd by Jove's behest
A Paphian and a Delphian priest.
  Once when by Trent's pellucid streams,
In days of prattling infancy,
Led by young wondering ecstasy,
To view the sun's refulgent beams,
As on the sportive waves they play'd,
Too far I negligently stray'd,
The god of day his lamp withdrew,
Evening her dusky mantle spread,
And from her moistened tresses shed
Refreshing drops of pearly dew.

Close by the borders of a wood,
Where an old ruin'd abbey stood,
Far from a fondling mother's sight,
With toil of childish sport oppress'd,
My tender limbs sunk down to rest
Midst the dark horrors of the night:
As Horace erst by fabled doves
With spring's first leaves was mantled o'er,
A wanderer from his native groves;
Alike regard the British loves
To me their future poet bore;
Nor left me guardianless alone.
For though no nymph or faun appear'd,
Nor piping satyr there was heard,
And here the dryads are unknown;
Yet, natives true of English ground,
Sweet elves and fays in mantles green,
By shepherds oft in moonlight seen,
And dapper fairies danc'd around:
The nightingale, her love-lorn lay
Neglecting on the neighbouring spray,
Strew'd with fresh flowers my turfy bed,
And, at the first approach of morn,
The red-breast stript the fragrant thorn
On roses wild to lay my head.
Thus, as the wondering rustics say,
In smiling sleep they found me laid
Beneath a blossom'd hawthorn's shade,
Whilst sportive bees, in mystic play,
With honey fill'd my little lips,
Blent with each sweet that zephyr sips
From flowery cups in balmy May.
From that bless'd hour my bosom glow'd,

Ere vanity or fame inspir'd,
With unaffected transports fir'd,
And from my tongue untutor'd flow'd,
In childhood's inattentive days,
The lisping notes of artless lays.
Nor have these dear enchantments ceas'd
For what in innocence began
Still with increasing years increas'd,
And youth's warm joys now charm the man.
Perhaps this fondly foster'd flame,
E'en when in dust my body's laid,
Will o'er the tomb preserve its fame,
And glow within my future shade;
If thus, as poets have agreed,
The soul when from the body freed,
In t' other world confines her bliss
To the same joys she lov'd in this,
Thine, when she's pass'd the stygian flood,
Shall, midst the patriot chiefs of old,
The wise, the valiant, and the good,
(Great names in deathless archives roll'd!)
Strike with a master's mighty hand
Thy golden lyre's profoundest chords,
And fascinate the kindred band
With magic of poetic words.
Ravish'd with thy mellifluent lay,
Plato and Virgil shall entwine
Of olive and the Mantuan bay
A never fading crown for thee;
And learn'd Lucretius shall resign,
Among the followers of the Nine,
His philosophic dignity.
For though his faithful pencil drew
Nature's external symmetry,

Yet to the mind's capacious view,
That unconfin'd expatiates
O'er mighty Nature's wondrous whole,
Thy nicer stroke delineates
The finer features of the soul.
And, whilst the Theban bard to thee
Shall yield the heart-elating lyre,
Horace shall hear attentively
Thy finger touch his softer wire
To more familiar harmony.
Meanwhile thy Aristippus' shade
Shall seek where sweet Anacreon plays,
Where Chapelle spends his festive days,
Where lies the vine-impurpled glade
By tuneful Chaulieu vocal made,
Or where our Shenstone's mossy cell,
Or where the fair Deshouliéres strays,
Or Hammond and Pavillon dwell,
And Gresset's gentle spirit roves,
Surrounded by a group of loves,
With roses crown'd and asphodel.
Let the fur'd pedants of the schools,
In learning's formidable show,
Full of wise laws and bookish rules,
The meagre dupes of misery grow;
A lovelier doctrine I profess
Than their dull science can avow;
All that belongs to happiness
Their heads are welcome still to know,
My heart's contented to possess.
For in soft elegance and ease,
Secure of living while I live,
Each momentary bliss I seize,
Ere these warm faculties decay,

The fleeting moments to deceive
Of human life's allotted day.
And when the' invidious hand of time
By stealth shall silver o'er my head,
Still pleasure's rosy walks I'll tread,
Still with the jocund muses rhyme,
And haunt the green Idalian bow'rs,
Whilst wanton boys of Paphos' court
In myrtles hide my staff for sport,
And coif me, where I'm bald, with flow'rs.
  Thus to each happy habit true,
Preferring happiness to pow'r,
Will Aristippus e'en pursue
Life's comforts to thy latest hour,
Till age (the only malady
Which thou and med'cine cannot cure,
Yet what all covet to endure)
This innocent voluptuary
Shall, from the laughs and graces here,
With late and lenient change remove,
To regions of Elysian air,
Where shades of mortal pleasures rove;
Destin'd, without alloy, to share
Eternal joys of mutual love,
Which transitory were above.

HYMN TO HEALTH.

WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

Sweet as the fragrant breath of genial May,
  Come, fair Hygeia! goddess heavenly born,
More lovely than the sun's returning ray,
  To northern regions, at the half year's morn.

Where shall I seek thee? in the wholesome grot,
  Where temperance her scanty meal enjoys?
Or peace, contented with her humble lot,
  Beneath her thatch the' inclement blast defies?

Swept from each flower that sips the morning dew,
  Thy wing besprinkles all the scenes around;
Where'er thou fly'st, the blossoms blush anew,
  And purple violets paint the hallow'd ground.

Thy presence renovated nature shows,
  By thee each shrub with varied hue is dy'd,
Each tulip with redoubled lustre glows,
  And all creation smiles with flowery pride.

But in thy absence joy is felt no more,
  The landscape wither'd e'en in spring appears,
The morn lours ominous o'er the dusky shore,
  And evening suns set half extinct in tears.

Ruthless disease ascends, when thou art gone
  From the dark regions of the' abyss below,
With pestilence, the guardian of her throne,
  Breathing contagion from the realms of woe.

In vain her citron groves Italia boasts,
  Or Po, the balsam of his weeping trees;
In vain Arabia's aromatic coasts
  Tincture the pinions of the passing breeze.

No wholesome scents impregn the western gale,
  But noxious stench exhal'd by scorching heat,
Where gasping swains the poisonous air inhale
  That once diffus'd a medicinal sweet.

Me, abject me, with pale disease oppress'd,
  Heal with the balm of thy prolific breath,
Rekindle life within my clay-cold breast,
  And shield my youth from canker-worms of death.

Then on the verdant turf, thy favourite shrine,
  Restor'd to thee a votary I'll come,
Grateful to offer to thy power divine
  Each herb that grows round Æsculapius' tomb.

SONG.

The nymph that I lov'd was as cheerful as day,
And as sweet as the blossoming hawthorn in May;
Her temper was smooth as the down on the dove,
And her face was as fair as the mother's of love.

Though mild as the pleasantest zephyr that sheds,
And receives gentle odours from violet beds,
Yet warm in affection as Phœbus at noon,
And as chaste as the silver white beams of the moon.

Her mind was unsullied as new-fallen snow,
Yet as lively as tints of young Iris's bow,
As firm as the rock, and as calm as the flood,
Where the peace-loving halcyon deposits her brood.

The sweets that each virtue or grace had in store,
She cull'd as the bee would the bloom of each
flower;
Which treasur'd for me, O! how happy was I,
For though her's to collect, it was mine to enjoy.

SONG TO WINIFREDA.

Away, let nought, to love displeasing,
My Winifreda! move thy fear;
Let nought delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy care.

What though no grants of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood:
We'll shine in more substantial honours,
And to be noble, we'll be good.

What though from fortune's lavish bounty
No mighty treasures we possess,
We'll find within our pittance plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;
For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
  Shall sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke;
And all the great ones much shall wonder,
  How they admire such little folk.

Through youth and age in love excelling
  We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet smiling peace shall crown our dwelling,
  And babes, sweet smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
  Whilst round my knees they fondly clung,
To see them look their mother's features,
  To hear them lisp their mother's tongue.

And when, with envy, Time transported
  Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
  And I go wooing in my boys.

A FATHER'S ADVICE TO HIS SON.

AN ELEGY.

IN IMITATION OF THE OLD SONG TO WINIFREDA.

Written in the year 1758.

——————aspice vultus
Ecce meos: utinamque oculos in pectore posses
Inserere, et patrias intus dependere curas.
OVID. MET.

Deep in a grove by cypress shaded,
  Where mid-day sun had seldom shone,
Or noise the solem scene invaded,
  Save some afflicted muse's moan;

A swain, tow'rds full-ag'd manhood wending,
  Sate sorrowing at the close of day;
At whose fond side a boy attending
  Lisp'd half his father's cares away.

The father's eyes no object wrested,
  But on the smiling prattler hung,
Till, what his throbbing heart suggested,
  These accents trembled from his tongue:—

'My youth's first hope, my manhood's treasure,
  My prattling innocent, attend,
Nor fear rebuke or sour displeasure,
  A father's loveliest name is friend.

'Some truths, from long experience flowing,
  Worth more than royal grants, receive;
For truths are wealth of Heaven's bestowing,
  Which kings have seldom power to give.

'Since, from an ancient race descended,
  You boast an unattainted blood,
By yours be their fair fame attended,
  And claim by birthright to be good.

'In love for every fellow-creature
  Superior rise above the crowd;
What most ennobles human nature
  Was ne'er the portion of the proud.

'Be thine the generous heart that borrows
  From others' joys a friendly glow;
And, for each hapless neighbour's sorrows,
  Throbs with a sympathetic woe.

'This is the temper most endearing;
  Though wide proud pomp her banners spreads,
An heav'nlier power good-nature bearing
  Each heart in willing thraldom leads.

'Taste not from fame's uncertain fountain
  The peace-destroying streams that flow,
Nor from ambition's dangerous mountain
  Look down upon the world below.

'The princely pine on hills exalted,
  Whose lofty branches cleave the sky,
By winds, long brav'd, at last assaulted,
  Is headlong whirl'd in dust to lie;

'Whilst the mild rose, more safely growing
  Low in its unaspiring vale,
Amidst retirement's shelter blowing
  Exchanges sweets with every gale.

'Wish not for beauty's darling features,
  Moulded by nature's fondling pow'r,
For fairest forms 'mong human creatures
  Shine but the pageants of an hour.

'I saw, the pride of all the meadow,
  At noon, a gay Narcissus blow,
Upon a river's bank, whose shadow
  Bloom'd in the silver waves below;

'By noon-tide's heat its youth was wasted,
  The waters, as they pass'd, complain'd:
At eve its glories all were blasted,
  And not one former tint remain'd.

'Nor let vain wit's deceitful glory
  Lead you from wisdom's path astray;
What genius lives renown'd in story,
  To happiness who found the way?

'In yonder mead behold that vapour,
  Whose vivid beams illusive play,
Far off it seems a friendly taper
  To guide the traveller on his way;

'But should some hapless wretch, pursuing,
  Tread where the treacherous meteors glow,
He'd find, too late his rashness ruing,
  That fatal quicksands lurk below.

'In life such bubbles nought admiring,
  Gilt with false light, and fill'd with air,
Do you, from pageant crowds retiring,
  To peace in virtue's cot repair;

'There seek the never-wasted treasure,
  Which mutual love and friendship give,
Domestic comfort, spotless pleasure,
  And bless'd, and blessing, you will live.

'If Heav'n with children crowns your dwelling,
  As mine its bounty does with you,
In fondness fatherly excelling.
  The' example you have felt, pursue.'

He paus'd—for tenderly caressing
  The darling of his wounded heart,
Looks had means only of expressing
  Thoughts language never could impart.

Now night her mournful mantle spreading,
  Had rob'd with black the' horizon round,
And dank dews, from her tresses shedding,
  With genial moisture bath'd the ground;

When back to city-follies flying,
  Midst custom's slaves he liv'd resign'd,
His face, array'd in smiles, denying
  The true complexion of his mind;

For seriously around surveying
  Each character, in youth and age,
Of fools betray'd, and knaves betraying,
  That play'd upon this human stage:

(Peaceful himself and undesigning)
  He loath'd the scenes of guile and strife,
And felt each secret wish inclining
  To leave this fretful farce of life.

Yet to whate'er above was fated
  Obediently he bow'd his soul;
For, what all-bounteous Heaven created,
  He thought Heaven only should control.

THE TOMB OF SHAKSPEARE.

A VISION.

What time the jocund rosy-bosom'd hours
  Led forth the train of Phœbus and the spring,
And zephyr mild, profusely scatter'd flowers
  On earth's green mantle from his musky wing;

The morn unbar'd the ambrosial gates of light,
  Westward the raven-pinion'd darkness flew,
The landscape smil'd in vernal beauty bright,
  And to their graves the sullen ghosts withdrew.

The nightingale no longer swell'd her throat
  With love-lorn plainings, tremulous and slow;
And on the wings of silence ceas'd to float
  The gurgling notes of her melodious woe;

The god of sleep mysterious visions led
  In gay procession 'fore the mental eye,
And my freed soul awhile her mansion fled,
  To try her plumes for immortality.

Through fields of air methought I took my flight,
  Through every clime, o'er every region pass'd;
No paradise or ruin 'scap'd my sight,
  Hesperian garden, or Cimmerian waste.

On Avon's banks I lit, whose streams appear
  To wind with eddies fond round Shakspeare's tomb,
The year's first feathery songsters warble near,
  And violets breathe, and earliest roses bloom.

Here Fancy sat (her dewy fingers cold
  Decking with flowerets fresh the' unsullied sod)
And bath'd with tears the sad sepulchral mold,
  Her favourite offspring's long and last abode.

'Ah! what avails (she cried) a poet's name?
  Ah! what avails the' immortalizing breath
To snatch from dumb oblivion other's fame?
  My darling child here lies a prey to death!

'Let gentle Otway, white-rob'd pity's priest,
From grief domestic teach the tears to flow;
Or Southern captivate the' impassion'd breast
With heartfelt sighs and sympathy of woe.

'For not to these his genius was confin'd,
Nature and I each tuneful power had given,
Poetic transports of the maddening mind,
And the wing'd words that waft the soul to heaven.

'The fiery glance of the' intellectual eye,
Piercing all objects of creation's store,
Which on this world's extended surface lie;
And plastic thought that still created more.'

'O grant, (with eager rapture I replied)
Grant me, great goddess of the changeful eye!
To view each being in poetic pride,
To whom thy son gave immortality.'

Sweet Fancy smil'd, and wav'd her mystic rod,
When straight these visions felt her powerful arm,
And one by one succeeded at her nod,
As vassal sprites obey the wizard's charm.

First a celestial form* (of azure hue,
Whose mantle, bound with brede ethereal, flow'd
To each soft breeze its balmy breath that drew)
Swift down the sun-beams of the noon-tide rode.

Obedient to the necromantic sway
Of an old sage, to solitude resign'd,
With fenny vapours he obscur'd the day,
Launch'd the long lightning, and let loose the wind.

* Ariel, in the Tempest.

He whirl'd the tempest through the howling air,
  Rattled the dreadful thunderclap on high,
And rais'd a roaring elemental war
  Betwixt the sea-green waves and azure sky:

Then like Heaven's mild ambassador of love
  To man repentant, bade the tumult cease;
Smooth'd the blue bosom of the realms above,
  And hush'd the rebel elements to peace.

Unlike to this, in spirit or in mien,
  Another form* succeeded to my view;
A two-legg'd brute, which nature made in spleen,
  Or from the loathing womb unfinish'd drew.

Scarce could he syllable the curse he thought,
  Prone were his eyes to earth, his mind to evil,
A carnal friend to imperfection wrought,
  The mongrel offspring of a witch and devil.

Next bloom'd, upon an ancient forest's bound,
  The flowery margin† of a silent stream,
O'er-arch'd by oaks with ivy mantled round,
  And gilt by silver Cynthia's maiden beam.

On the green carpet of the' unbended grass,
  A dapper train of female fairies play'd,
And ey'd their gambols in the watery glass,
  That smoothy stole along the shadowy glade.

Through these the queen, Titania, pass'd ador'd,
  Mounted aloft in her imperial car,
Journeying to see great Oberon her lord
  Wage the mock battles of a sportive war.

* Caliban, in the Tempest.
† Fairy-land, from the Midsummer-Night's Dream.

Arm'd cap-a-pie, forth march'd the fairy king,
  A stouter warrior never took the field,
His threatening lance a hornet's horrid sting,
  The sharded beetle's scale his sable shield.

Around their chief the elfin host appear'd,
  Each little helmet sparkling like a star,
And their sharp spears a pierceless phalanx rear'd,
  A grove of thistles glittering in the air.

The scene then chang'd from this romantic land
  To a bleak waste by boundary unconfin'd,
Where three swart sisters* of the weïrd band
  Were muttering curses to the troublous wind.

Pale want had wither'd every furrow'd face,
  Bow'd was each carcass with the weight of years,
And each sunk eye-ball from its hollow case
  Distill'd cold rheum's involuntary tears.

Hors'd on three staves, they posted to the bourn
  Of a drear island, where the pendant brow
Of a rough rock, shag'd horribly with thorn, [low.
  Frown'd on the boisterous wave which rag'd be-

Deep in a gloomy grot, remote from day,
  Where smiling comfort never show'd her face,
Where light ne'er enter'd, save one rueful ray
  Discovering all the terrors of the place,

They held damn'd mysteries with infernal state,
  Whilst ghastly goblins glided slowly by,
The screech-owl scream'd the dying call of fate,
  And ravens croak'd their horrid augury.

* The Witches in Macbeth.

No human footstep cheer'd the dread abode,
  Nor sign of living creature could be seen,
Save where the reptile snake, or sullen toad,
  The murky floor had soil'd with venom green.

Sudden I heard the whirlwind's hollow sound,
  Each weïrd sister vanish'd into smoke;
Now a dire yell of spirits* under ground [broke;
  Through troubled earth's wide yawning surface

When lo! each injur'd apparition rose;
  Aghast the murderer started from his bed;
Guilt's trembling breath his heart's red current froze
  And horror's dew-drops bath'd his frantic head.

More had I seen—but now the god of day
  O'er earth's broad breast his flood of light had spread,
When Morpheus call'd his fickle train away,
  And on their wings each bright illusion fled.

Yet still the dear enchantress of the brain
  My wakeful eyes with wishful wanderings sought,
Whose magic will controls the' ideal train,
  The ever-restless progeny of thought.

'Sweet power! (said I) for others gild the ray
  Of wealth, or honour's folly-feather'd crown;
Or lead the madding multitude astray,
  To grasp at air-blown bubbles of renown.

'Me, (humbler lot!) let blameless bliss engage,
  Free from the noble mob's ambitious strife,
Free from the muckworm miser's lucrous rage,
  In calm contentment's cottag'd vale of life.

* Ghosts in Macbeth, Richard III. &c.

'If frailties there (for who from them is free?)
Through error's maze my devious footsteps lead,
Let them be frailties of humanity,
And my heart plead the pardon of my head.

'Let not my reason impiously require,
What Heaven has plac'd beyond its narrow span;
But teach me to subdue each fierce desire,
Which wars within this little empire, man.

'Teach me, what all believe, but few possess,
That life's best science is ourselves to know;
The first of human blessings is to bless;
And happiest he who feels another's woe.

'Thus cheaply wise, and innocently great,
While time's smooth sand shall regularly pass,
Each destin'd atom's quiet course I'll wait,
Nor rashly break, nor wish to stop the glass.

'And when in death my peaceful ashes lie,
If e'er some tongue congenial speaks my name,
Friendship shall never blush to breathe a sigh,
And great ones envy such an honest fame.'

VER-VERT:

OR THE

NUNNERY PARROT.

AN HEROIC POEM, IN FOUR CANTOS.

*Inscribed to the Abbess of D*****.*

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF MONSIEUR GRESSET.)

CANTO I.

O you, round whom, at virtue's shrine,
The solitary graces shine,
With native charms all hearts engage,
And reign without religious rage;
You whose congenial soul by heaven
A pleasing guide to truth was given,
Uniting, with the family
Of rigid duties, harmless mirth,
Daughter of social liberty,
Twin-born with humour at a birth;
And every other power to please,
Taste, fancy, elegance, and ease;
O! since you bid your bard relate
A noble bird's disastrous fate,
In notes of sympathetic woe,
Be you my muse, my soul inspire,
And teach my numbers how to flow
Like those which trembled from your lyre
In soft and sorrow-soothing sound,
Whilst listening Cupids wept around,

When dear Sultana's* spirit fled,
In youthful vigour's vernal bloom,
To the dark mansions of the dead:
Then for my hero's hapless doom
Such tears might once again be shed.
One might, upon his virtues cross'd
By adverse fortune's envious rage,
And wanderings over many a coast,
Swell out the soporific page,
And other Odysseys compose
To lull the reader to repose:
One might the gods and devils raise
Of superannuated lies,
Spin out the deeds of forty days
To volumes of dull histories,
And with a pompous tediousness,
Sublimely heavy, moralize
Upon a bird, in epic dress,
Who as Æneas' self was great,
As famous too for godliness,
And each way more unfortunate,
But folios are, in verse, excess,
Which the sweet Muses must abhor,
For they are sportive bees of spring,
Who dwell not long on any bower,
But, lightly wandering on the wing,
Collect the bloom from flower to flower.
And, when one fragrant blossom's dry,
To other sweets unrifled fly.
This truth my observation drew
From faultless nature, and from you;
And may these lines, I copy, prove
I'm govern'd by the laws I love!

* A lap dog.

Where truth's seraphic daughters glow,
Another Promethean ray
To this benighted globe below;
Mine, like soft Cythera's dove,
Contented with her native grove,
Shall fondly sooth the' attentive ears
Of life's way-wearied travellers;
And from the paths of fancied woes,
Lead 'em to that serene abode,
Where real bliss and real good
In sweet security repose:
Or, as the lark with matin-notes,
To youth's new voyagers, in spring,
As over head in air she floats,
Attendant on unruffled wing,
Warbles inartificial joy,
My muse in tender strains shall sing
The feats of Venus' winged boy,
Or how the nimble-footed hours,
With the three graces knit in dance,
Follow the goddess Elegance
To Hebe's court in Paphian bow'rs.
  Nor let the supercilious wise,
And gloomy sons of melancholy,
These unaffected lays despise,
As day-dreams of melodious folly:
Reason a lovelier aspect wears,
The smiles and muses when between,
Than in the Stoic's rigid mien
With beard philosophiz'd by years;
And virtue mopes not in the cell
Where cloister'd pride and penance dwell,
But, in the chariot of the loves,
She triumphs innocently gay,
Drawn by the yok'd Idalian doves,

The youth too soon who goes abroad,
Will half a foreigner become,
And bring his wondering friends a load
Of strange exotic vices home.
  This truth the hero of my tale
Exemplifies in tarnish'd glory;
Should sceptic wits the truth assail,
I call, for witness to my story,
Each cloister'd echo now that dwells
In Nevers' consecrated cells.
  At Nevers, but few years ago,
Among the nuns o' the' visitation,
There dwelt a parrot, though a beau,
For sense of wondrous reputation;
Whose virtues and genteel address,
Whose figure, and whose noble soul,
Would have secur'd him from distress,
Could wit and beauty fate control.
Ver-Vert (for so the nuns agreed
To call this noble personage)
The hopes of an illustrious breed,
To India ow'd his parentage;
By an old missionary sent
To this sad convent for his good,
He yet was young and innocent,
And nothing worldly understood.
Beauteous he was and debonair,
Light, spruce, inconstant, gay, and free,
And unreserv'd as youngsters are,
Ere age brings on hypocrisy;
In short, a bird, from prattling merit,
Worthy a convent to inherit.
  The tender cares I need not tell,
Of all the sisterhood devout,

Nothing, 'tis said, each lov'd so well,
Leave but her ghostly father out;
Nay, in some hearts, not void of grace,
One plain historian makes no doubt
The parrot of the priest took place.
He shar'd in this serene abode
Whate'er was lov'd by the profession;
On him such dainties were bestow'd
As nuns prepare against confession,
And for the sacred entrails hoard
Of holy fathers, in the Lord.
Sole licens'd male to be belov'd,
Ver-Vert was bless'd without control,
Caressing and caress'd he rov'd
Of all the monast'ry the soul;
Except some antiquated dames,
Whose hearts, to pleasure callous grown,
Remark'd with jealous eyes the flames
Of bosoms younger than their own.
At years of reason not arriv'd,
A life of privilege he liv'd,
He said and did whate'er he wou'd,
And what he said or did was good.
He'd peck the nuns in wanton play,
To wile their plain-work hours away;
No party ever was approv'd
Without his favourite company:
In him they found what females lov'd,
That life of bliss—variety.
He'd strut a beau in sportive rings,
Uttering pert sentences by rote,
Mimic the butterfly's light wings,
Or nightingale's complaining note;

He'd laugh, sing, whistle, joke, and leer,
And frolic, but discreetly so,
With a prudential, cautious fear,
As nuns probationary do.
Question'd at once by many a tongue
Incessantly inquisitive,
He could, discordant sounds among,
To each a proper answer give;
This power from Cæsar's nothing varies,
Who did at once great plans conceive,
And dictate to four secretaries.
  If chronicles may be believ'd,
So lov'd the pamper'd gallant liv'd,
That with the nuns he always din'd
On rarities of every kind;
Then hoards, occasionally varied,
Of biscuits, sweetmeats, nuts, and fruit,
Each sister in her pocket carried,
Subordinately to recruit,
At leisure times, when not at table,
His stomach indefatigable.
The little cares, with tender faces
And fond attentions, as they say,
Are natives of these holy places,
As Ver-Vert witness'd every day.
No human parrot of the court
Was fondled half so much as he;
In indolence genteel, and sport,
His hours roll'd on delightfully:
Each chamber that he fancied best
Was his the dormitory round,
And, where at eve he chose to rest,
Honour'd, thrice honour'd was the ground:
And much the lucky nun was bless'd!

But nights he very seldom pass'd
With those whom years and prudence bless'd,
The plain neat room was more his taste
Of some young damsel, not profess'd;
This nicety at board and bed
Show'd he was nobly born and bred.
When the young female anchorite,
Whom all the rest with envy view'd,
Had fix'd him for the coming night,
Perch'd on her Agnus-box he stood,
Silent in undisturb'd repose
Till Venus' warning star arose:
And when at morn the pious maid
Her toilet's mysteries display'd,
He freely saw whate'er was done;
I say the toilette, for I've read,
(But speak it a lower tone,)
That virgins, in a cloister bred,
Their looks and languishings review
In mirrors to their eyes as true
As those that serve to show the faces
Of dames who flaunt in gems and laces.
For, as in city or at court
Some certain taste or mode prevails,
There is among the godly sort
A taste in putting on their veils;
There is an art to fold with grace,
Round a young vestal's blooming face,
Plain crape, or other simple stuff,
With happy negligence enough.
Often the sportive loves in swarms,
Which to the monast'ries repair,
Spread o'er the holy fillets charms,
And tie them with a killing air;

In short the nuns are never seen
In parlour or at grate below,
Ere at the looking-glass they've been,
To steal a decent glance or so.
This softly whisper'd, friends between,
Further digression we adjourn,
And to our hero now return.
Safe in this unmolested scene
Ver-Vert, amidst a life of bliss,
Unrivall'd reign'd on every part;
Her slighted sparrows took amiss
This change in sister Thecla's heart;
Four finches through mere rage expir'd,
At his advancement mortified;
And two grimalkins, late admir'd,
With envy languish'd, droop'd, and died.
  In days like these of joy and love,
Who would have thought such tender cares
To form his youthful mind, should prove,
Through fortune's spite, destructive snares?
Or that an adverse time should come
When this same idol of their hearts
Should stand the mark, by cruel doom,
Of horror's most envenom'd darts?
But stop, my muse, forbid to flow
The tears arising from the sight
Of such an unexpected woe,
Too bitter fruit, alas! to grow
From the soft root of dear delight.

CANTO II.

In such a school, a bird of sense
Would soon acquire, it is confess'd,
The gift of copious eloquence;
For, save his meals and hours of rest,
His tongue was always occupied:
And no good treatise could excel,
In phrases ready cut and dried,
His doctrines about living well.
He was not like those parrots rude
Whom, dangling in a public cage,
The common manners of the age
Have render'd conversably lewd;
Who, doctor'd by the worldly tribe,
With frail concupiscence endued,
Each human vanity describe.
Our Ver-Vert was a saint in grain,
A soul with innocency fraught,
Who never utter'd word profane,
Who never had immodest thought:
But in the room of ribald wit
Each mystic colloquy he knew,
And many a text in holy writ,
With prayers and collects not a few;
Could psalms and canticles repeat,
And *benedicite* complete;
He could petition heaven for grace
With sanctimonious voice and eyes,
And at a proper time and place
Religiously soliloquize.
Each help he had in this learn'd college
That could conduce to sacred knowledge:

For many virgins had retreated,
Through grace, to this religious fold,
Who, word for word, by rote repeated
Each Christmas carol, new and old.
From frequent lessons every day
The scholar grew as learn'd as they;
Their very tone of speaking too
In pious drawlings he express'd,
The same religious sighs he drew
Deep heaving from the godly breast,
And languid notes in which these doves
Mournfully chaunt their mystic loves:
In short, the bird perform'd his part
In all the psalmodizing art.

Such merit could not be confin'd
Within a cloister's narrow bound,
But flew, for fame is swift as wind,
The neighbouring territories round;
Through Nevers' town, from morn to night,
Scarce any other talk was heard,
But of discourses exquisite
Betwixt the nuns and Indian bird;
And ev'n from Moulins numbers came
To witness to the truth of fame.
Ver-Vert, the parlour's boasted glory,
Whilst all that came were told his story,
Perch'd proud upon his favourite stand,
Sister Melania's ivory hand,
Who pointed out each excellence
Of mind or body he possess'd,
His sweet mild temper, polish'd sense,
And various colours on his breast,
When his engaging aspect won
Each visitor he look'd upon:

But beauty the most exquisite
Was, in our tender proselyte,
The least his qualities among,
For all forgot his feathery pride,
And every outward charm beside,
The moment that they heard his tongue.
With various righteous graces fill'd,
By the good sisterhood instill'd,
The' illustrious bird his speech began,
At every turn allusions new,
Conceptions fine, and doctrines true,
In streams of honey'd language ran.
But what was singularly new,
In this uncommon gift of speech,
And scarce will be reputed true,
Not any whilst they heard him preach,
Did ever feel (his powers were such)
Ecclesiastic lethargy,
From soporific sanctity;
What orator can boast as much?
Much was he prais'd, and much caress'd,
Whilst he, familiariz'd to fame,
Convinc'd 'twas only a mere name,
His head on his projected breast
With priestly gentleness reclin'd,
And always modestly express'd
The inward triumph of his mind.
When he had utter'd to the crowd
His treasur'd scientific store,
He mutter'd something not aloud,
And sunk in cadence more and more,
Till, with an aspect sanctified,
At last in silence down he sat,
And left his audience edified
On what had pass'd to ruminate.

These eloquent harangues would flow
With choice of sweetest phrases fraught,
Except a trifling word or so,
Which accidentally he caught,
Of scandal at the grate below,
Or some small syllable of haste,
Which gentle nuns will, by the by,
At one another sometimes cast,
When none but holy ears are nigh.
  Thus liv'd in this delightful cage,
As saint, as master, or as sage,
Good father Ver-Vert, dear to more
Than of veil'd Hebes half a score,
As any cloister'd monk as fat,
As reverend too in holy state,
Learn'd as an abbé town-approv'd,
And fair as youths by brides caress'd;
For, lovely, he was always lov'd,
Perfum'd, well-bred, in fashion dress'd;
In short, had he not hapless rov'd
To see the world, completely bless'd.
  But soon the fatal moments came
Of ever-mournful memory,
Destructive to our hero's fame:
Voyage of crimes and misery,
Of sad remorse and endless shame!
Would foresight, in a former age,
Had torn it from the' historic page!
Ah! what a dangerous good at best
Is the possession of renown;
Obscurity is sooner bless'd,
From his sad fate it will be shown:
Too much success and brilliant parts
Have often ruin'd virtuous hearts.

Thy talents, Ver-Vert, and thy name,
To these lone walls were not confin'd;
As far as Nants the voice of fame
Proclaim'd the' endowments of thy mind.
At Nants, 'tis known, the visitation
Of reverend sisters has a fold,
Who there, as elsewhere through the nation,
Know first whate'er by fame is told.
With other news, each holy dame,
This parrot's merit having heard,
Had longings to behold the bird.
A lay-maid's wish is like a flame;
But, when a nun has such desire,
'Tis fifty times a fiercer fire.
Their curious hearts already burn'd,
Their thoughts to distant Nevers flew,
And many a holy head was turn'd,
The feather'd prodigy to view.
Immediately upon the spot
To the good abbess of the place
A female secretary wrote,
Beseeching her to have the grace
To Nants, by water down the Loire,
To send the bird so fam'd for sense,
That all the female Nantine choir
Might hear and see his excellence.
The letter goes: all question, when
The bearer will return again:
'Twill be eleven days at least,
An age to any female breast!
They send each day fresh invitation,
Depriv'd of sleep through expectation.
Howe'er, at length to Nevers came
This letter of importance great;

At once the convent's in a flame,
And the whole chapter's summon'd straight:
'Lose Ver-Vert! heaven! send rather death!
What comfort will with us be left,
These solitary towers beneath,
When of the darling bird bereft?'
Thus spoke the nuns of blooming years,
Whose hearts, fatigued with holy leisure,
Prefer'd to penance and to tears
Soft sentiments of harmless pleasure.
In truth, a holy flock, at least,
So close confin'd, might fairly claim
To be by one poor bird caress'd,
Since there no other parrot came,
Fledg'd or unfledg'd, to cheer their nest.
Yet 'twas the' opinion of the dames
Who, by their age superior, sat
Rulers in senatorial state,
Whose hearts resisted passion's flames,
That, for a fortnight's space or so,
Their dear disciple straight should go;
For, prudence overweighing love,
The' infatuated state decreed
A stubborn negative might prove
The cause of mutual hate, and breed
For ever after much bad blood
'Twixt theirs and Nants's sisterhood.
  Soon as the ladies, in conclusion,
O' the' upper house the bill had pass'd,
The commons were in great confusion;
Young Seraphina cry'd in haste,
'Ah! what a sacrifice they make!
And is it true, consent they give?

Fate from us nothing more can take!
How, Ver-Vert leave us, and we live!'
Another, though reputed sage,
Grew pale at what she heard them say;
No counsel could her grief assuage,
She trembled, wept, and swoon'd away.
All mourn'd departing Ver-Vert's fate,
Presaging, from I know not what,
This tour would prove unfortunate.
In horrid dreams the night they spent,
The morn redoubled horrors sent.
Too vain regret! the mournful hour
Already's come, within their view
The boat is waiting at the shore,
The fates command to bid adieu,
And to his absence, for a while,
Their throbbing bosoms reconcile.
Already every sister pin'd
Like the soft turtle of the grove,
To grief beforehand self-resign'd
For the lone hours of widow'd love.
What tender kisses were bestow'd
On Ver-Vert leaving this abode!
What briny streams of sorrow flow'd!
The nearer his departure drew
They doated on him more and more,
And found each moment genius new,
And beauties never seen before.
At length he leaves their wishful eyes,
Love with him from the convent flies.
'Ah! go, my child; my dearest, haste,
Where honour calls thee from my arms
But, O! return, thy exile past,
For ever true, and full of charms!

May zephyrs with their airy plumes
Waft thee securely on thy way!
Whilst I, amidst these dreary tombs
In anguish waste the tardy day,
And sadly solitary mourn,
Uncomforted, till thy return.
O Ver-Vert, dearest soul! adieu;
And, whilst thy journey happy proves,
May all, thy beauteous form who view,
Think thee the eldest of the loves!"
Such were the words and parting scene
Of one young lately-veiled fair,
Who oft, to dissipate chagrin,
In bed made many a fervent prayer,
Learnt from the manual of Racine:
And who with all her heart, no doubt,
Would, for sweet Ver-Vert's company,
Have left the holy monast'ry,
And follow'd him the world throughout.
But now the droll is put on board,
At present virtuous and sincere,
And modest too in deed and word:
O! may his bosom every where,
By prudence guarded, still retain
That worth, and bring it home again!
Be that however as it may,
The boat's already on its way;
The noise of waves beneath the prow
Re-echoes in the air above;
The zephyrs favourably blow,
And Nevers backward seems to move.

CANTO III.

In the same passage-boat, that bore
This bird of holiness from shore,
There happen'd the same time to sail
Two nymphs of constitution frail,
A nurse loquacious, two Gascoons,
A vagrant monk, and three dragoons,
Which, for a youth of piety,
Was worshipful society!
Ver-Vert, unpractis'd in their ways,
As folks in foreign countries do,
Stood silently in fix'd amaze;
Their thoughts and language both were new.
The style he did not understand;
It was not, like the Scriptures, phras'd
In dialect of holy land,
With sacred eastern figures rais'd;
Nor that, in which the vestal band
Of nuns their Maker pray'd and prais'd;
But full of what the bird surpris'd,
Big words not over Christianiz'd;
For the dragoons, a wordy race
Not burden'd with religious grace,
Spoke fluently the sutler's tongue;
Saint Bacchus only they ador'd,
To whom libations oft they pour'd
For pastime as they sail'd along;
The Gascoons and the female three
Convers'd in idioms which belong
To Venus's great mystery;
On t'other hand the sailors swore,
Curs'd, and blasphem'd each heavenly power.

Whose voices, not in flowers of speech,
But words sonorous, us'd to deal,
Roundly articulated each,
Nor lost the smallest syllable.
In this variety of sound
And unintelligible prate,
Ver-Vert, surpris'd at all around,
Sad, silent, and embarrass'd sat:
He fear'd his ignorance to betray,
And knew not what to think or say.
  The monk, to satisfy the crowd
Who long'd to hear his thoughts aloud,
To talk the pensive stranger press'd;
The girls in words too debonair,
Unus'd at penance, or in prayer,
The melancholy bird caress'd:
Here by the sex he lov'd address'd,
The parrot (whilst his look benign
With usual light religious glisters)
In sacred sighs and nunnery whine
Answers, 'God save you, holy sisters!'
At this 'God save you,' we'll suppose,
An universal laugh arose:
In ridicule the words aloud
Were echoed through the noisy crowd.
Thus mock'd, abash'd the novice stood,
And inly chew'd the mental cud.
He found what he had said was wrong,
And saw 'twas needful to endeavour
To speak the language of the throng,
If e'er he hop'd to gain their favour!
His heart, by nature fond of praise,
Which had been nourish'd all his days,

Till then, with flattery's incense full,
Now could, alas! sustain no more
Of constancy the modest power
Against the' assaults of ridicule;
Here first, by sour impatience cross'd,
Ver-Vert his innocency lost.
From thence he pour'd ungrateful curses
Against the nuns his former nurses,
Who never had adorn'd his mind,
Careless of literary merit,
With language copious and refin'd,
Replete with elegance and spirit.
To' acquire this great accomplishment
Each earnest faculty he bent,
And though his prudent tongue lay still,
His soul of thinking had its fill.
But first the bird resolv'd, in pet,
All the old gew-gaws to forget
Which hitherto compos'd his creed,
That new ideas might succeed.
In two days, by strict computation,
All former knowledge he expell'd;
So much the present conversation
The convent dialect excell'd.
This first step made, within a trice,
The truly docile animal
(Young minds too soon are skill'd in vice!)
In ribaldry was clerical,
And quickly learnt to curse and swear,
As fast as an old devil would chatter,
Bound down by chains of mystic prayer,
Beneath a pot of holy water.
His practice contradicted plain
A maxim which old books maintain,

That none to heinous crimes can leap
At first, but progress step by step;
For he at once, without degree,
Was doctor in iniquity.
He learnt by heart the alphabet
Of watermen, the Loire along;
And when, in any stormy fit,
An oath escap'd a sailor's tongue,
Ver-Vert, emphatically plain,
Re-echo'd 'damn you' back again.
On this, applauded by the crew,
Proudly content with what had past,
Solicitous he daily grew,
The shameful honour to pursue
Of pleasing their corrupted taste:
And, soon degrading to their bent
His generous organ of discourse,
Became profanely eloquent.
Ah! why should bad examples force
A youthful heart, born free from evils,
From heaven's allegiance to the devil's?
Ye nymphs of Nevers' convent chaste,
What did you in your cloister'd cells,
Where pensive melancholy dwells,
Whilst these unlucky moments pass'd?
In that sad interval, no doubt,
Nine days you spent in prayers devout,
Petitioning kind Heaven to give
A happy journey home again
To the most thankless soul alive,
Who, quite regardless of your pain,
Abroad engag'd in pleasures new,
Spent not a single thought on you.

The yawning band of tediousness
The convent round besieg'd each gate;
And spleen in fanciful distress
Sat sullen at the gloomy grate;
Nay, what the sex shuns every where,
Silence herself came almost there.
Ah! cease your vows, for Ver-Vert's grown
Unworthy of your lavish loves;
Ver-Vert no longer will be known
By heart as spotless as the dove's,
By temper softer than the down,
By fervency of soul in prayer:
Oh! must the muse the truth declare?
A very wretched profligate,
A scoffer of his ancient home,
Blasphemer of your holy state,
And loose apostate he's become;
What you such care and labour cost,
Among the winds and waves is lost.
Then, fair ones, fondly boast no more
His science and his docile soul;
Genius is vain, and learning's store,
If virtue governs not the whole.
Forget him quite; the shameful wretch
His heart has tainted with pollution,
And given up all those powers of speech,
And mighty parts, to prostitution.
But now to Nants, the boat's last station,
Our hero and his friends draw nigh,
Where through impatient expectation
The holy sisters almost die:
For their desires the rising sun
Begins his daily course too late;
Too slow his fiery coursers run,
To gain at eve the western gate.

The flatterer hope, in this suspense,
For ever artful to deceive,
Promis'd a prodigy to give
Of genius, dignity, and sense;
A parrot highly-born and bred,
Possess'd of noble sentiments,
Persuasive tongue, discerning head;
In short, with all accomplishments:
But O! I mention it with pain,
These expectations all were vain!
At length the vessel reaches land,
Where an old solemn sister sat,
Commission'd by the sacred band
The' arrival of the bird to wait:
Who, on that errand daily sent,
E'er since the first epistle went,
At first approach of rising day
Her wandering eyes impatient cast,
Which seem'd, along the watery waste,
To waft our hero on his way.
The sly bird had no sooner seen
The nun near whom he disembark'd,
But straight he knew her by the mien
And eyes with holy prudery mark'd,
By the white gloves and languid tone,
The veil, and linsey-woolsey vest,
And, what would have suffic'd alone,
The little cross upon her breast.
He shudder'd at the' approaching evil,
And soldier-like, we may conclude,
Sincerely wish'd her at the devil;
Preferring much the brotherhood
Of the dragoons, who spoke out plain,
Whose dialect he understood,
Than to return to learn again

Prayers stuff'd with many a holy notion,
And ceremonials of devotion:
But the vex'd droll, by force, was fated
To be conducted where he hated.
The careful carrier held her prize
In spite of all his rueful cries;
Though much he bit her, by the way,
Upon her arms, her neck, and face,
And in his anger, as they say,
Would not have scrupled any place.
At last howe'er, with much ado,
She brought him safe to sacred ground:
Ver-Vert's announc'd: the rumour flew
Swift as the wind the convent round.
The bell proclaims the welcome morn:
Straight from the choir each sister springs,
And to the common parlour's borne
On expectation's eager wings.
All crowd this wonder to behold
With longings truly female fir'd;
Nay ev'n the feeble and the old
With youth's warm thoughts are reinspir'd;
Whilst each, regardless of her years,
For speed forgets the load she bears;
And mother Agnes, near fourscore,
Now runs, who never ran before.

CANTO IV.

At length expos'd to public view,
His figure was by all admir'd;
Charm'd with a sight so fair and new,
Their eager eyes were never tir'd:

Their taste beyond dispute was true!
For though the rogue had swerv'd from duty,
He had not lost one jot of beauty,
And the camp mien and rakish stare
Improv'd it with an easy air.
Why, heaven, should charms attractive glow,
Brilliant, around a son of sin?
Rather deformity should show
The badness of the heart within.
To praise his looks and lovely feather
Our sisters babbled so together,
Unheard, it would have been no wonder,
If Heaven had roll'd its loudest thunder;
Meanwhile unmov'd the' apostate bird
Deign'd not to speak one pious word,
But like a lusty Carmelite
Roll'd his lascivious eyes about.
This gave offence: so lewd a sight
Was shocking to the band devout.
Next, when the mother-abbess came,
With an authoritative look,
The feather'd libertine to blame,
Contemptuously his tail he shook:
And, not maturely having weigh'd
The horror of the words he said,
Replied, in military phrase,
'What damn'd fools nuns are now-a-days!'
Our history notes, that on the way
These words he'd heard the sailors say.
At this, with looks demure, another
The holy sisterhood among,
(Willing to make him hold his tongue)
Cried, 'Fie! for shame, my dearest brother!'

For thanks this dearest brother swore,
And us'd, sagaciously enough,
One syllable that rhymes to more,
'Gainst which few female ears are proof.
'Jesu! good mother, (she exclaim'd)
This is some wicked witch, 'tis clear;
And not the bird of Nevers fam'd,
To friends of our religion dear!'
Here, sutler-like, he cry'd aloud
'The devil seize this noisy crowd!'
By turns each sister did essay
To curb the feather'd grenadier;
And each as fast was sent away
With something buzzing in her ear;
For, laughing at the younger tribe,
He mimick'd their loquacious rage;
And, still more freely to describe
The dull grimace of scolding age,
He ridicul'd the dying closes
Of precepts snuffled through their noses.
But, what was worse than all the rest,
By these dull sermons much oppress'd,
And with unvented choler swelling,
He thunder'd out each horrid word,
The very tars in noise excelling,
Which on the river he had heard;
Cursing and swearing all along,
Invoking every power of hell,
Whilst B's redundant from his tongue,
And F's emphatically fell.
The sense of what they heard him speak
The younger sisters could not tell;
For they believ'd his language Greek.

Next he came out with, 'blood! and zounds!
Damnation—brimstone—fire—and thunder!'
The grate, at these terrific sounds
Trembling, is almost split asunder;
And the good nuns, in speechless fright,
Crossing their throbbing bosoms, fly
Each to her cell remote from light,
Thinking the day of judgment nigh.
Wide opening her sepulchral jaws,
One ancient sister whines, 'What evil
Have we design'd, good Heaven! that draws
Upon us this incarnate devil?
By what incentive is he mov'd
So like the damn'd below to swear?
Is this that Ver-Vert so approv'd?
Are these his faculties so rare?
But let us without further pain
Send back the profligate again.'
'Mother of God! (another cries,)
What horrors are before our eyes!
In Nevers' consecrated dome
Is this the language vestals speak?
Is all their youth taught thus at home?
Home with the hateful heretic!
For, if he enters, we shall dwell
In league with all the fiends of hell.'
In fine, his freedom Ver-Vert lost;
And 'twas resolv'd, without delay,
To send the wretch cag'd-up away.
This end our pilgrim wish'd the most:
Howe'er, in form, he's cited first,
Arraign'd, detestable declar'd,
Convicted by the court, accurs'd,
And from each charity debar'd,

For having wickedly assail'd
The virtue of the sisters veil'd.
All sign the sentence, yet bemoan
The object it's inflicted on;
For pity 'tis ere full age blooms,
To find depravity so foul,
Or that, beneath such beauteous plumes,
A debauchee's corrupted soul,
The pagan manners of a Turk,
And tongue of Infidel, should lurk.
In short, his old conductress bore
The banish'd culprit to the port;
But in returning, as before,
He never bit our sister for't;
For joyfully he left the shore,
And in a tilt-boat home return'd,
Where Nevers' nuns his absence mourn'd.
  Such was the Iliad of his woes!
But ah! what unexpected mourning,
What clamour and despair arose,
When to his former friends returning,
He shock'd them with a repetition
Of his late verbal acquisition!
What could the' afflicted sisters do?
With eyes in tears, and hearts in trouble,
Nine venerable nuns, for woe
Each in a veil funereal double,
Into the seat of judgment go,
Who, in their wrinkled fronts resembled
Nine ages in a court assembled.
There, without hopes of happy ending,
Depriv'd of all to plead his cause
On whom there was the least depending,
Poor Van-Vert sat, unskill'd in laws,

Chain'd to his cage, in open court,
And stript of glory and support.
To condemnation they proceed;
Two Sibyls sentence him to bleed;
'Twas voted by two sisters more,
Not so religiously inhuman,
To send him to that Indian shore
Unknown to any Christian woman,
That conscience might his bosom gore,
And yield him up a prey to death,
Where first, with Brachmen, he drew breath.
But the five others all according
In lesser punishments awarding,
For penance, two long months conclude
That he should pass in abstinence,
Three more in dismal solitude,
And four in speechless penitence;
During which season they preclude
Biscuits and fruits, the toilet's treasures:
Alcoves and walks, those convent pleasures.
Nor was this all: for, to complete
His miserable situation,
They gave him, in his sad retreat,
For jailor, guard, and conversation,
A stale lay-sister, or much rather
An old veil'd ape, all skin and bone,
Or, cover'd o'er with wrinkled leather,
A walking female skeleton;
An object proper, to fall'n glory,
To cry aloud, memento mori.
Spite of this dragon's watchful soul,
The younger nuns would often go,
With looks of pity to condole:
Which ev'n in exile soften'd woe.

Nay some, from morning-prayers returning,
With nuts and candied almonds came;
But to a wretch in prison mourning
Weeds and ambrosia were the same.
Taught by misfortune's sound tuition,
Cloth'd with disgrace, and stung with pain,
Or sick of that old scarecrow vision,
The bird became in pure contrition
Acquainted with himself again:
Forgetting his belov'd dragoons,
And quite according with the nuns
In one continued unison
Of air, of manners, and of tone;
No sleek prebendal priest could be
More thoroughly devout than he.
When this conversion was related,
The great divan at once awarded
His banishment should be abated,
And further vengeance quite discarded.
There the bless'd day of his recal
Is annually a festival,
Whose silken moments, white and even,
Spun by the hands of of smiling love,
Whilst all the' attendant fates approve,
To soft delights are ever given.
How short's the date of human pleasure!
How false of happiness the measure!
The dormitory, strew'd with flowers,
Short prayer, rejoicing, song, and feast,
Sweet tumult, freedom, thoughtless hours,
Their amiable zeal express'd,
And not a single sign of sorrow
The woes predicted of to-morrow.
But, O! what favours misapplied
Our holy sisterhood bestow'd!

From abstinence's shallow tide
Into a stream that overflow'd
With sweets, so long debar'd from tasting,
Poor Ver-Vert too abruptly hasting,
(His skin with sugar being waded,
With liquid fires his entrails burn'd)
Beheld at once his roses faded,
And to funereal cypress turn'd.
The nuns endeavour'd, but in vain,
His fleeting spirit to detain:
But sweet excess had hasten'd fate;
And, whilst around the fair ones cried,
Of love a victim fortunate,
On pleasure's downy breast he died;
His dying words their bosoms fir'd,
And will for ever be admir'd.
Venus herself his eye-lids clos'd,
And in Elysium plac'd his shade,
Where hero-parrots safe repos'd
In almond groves that never fade,
Near him, whose fate and fluent tongue
Corinna's lover wept and sung.
  What tongue sufficiently can tell
How much bemoan'd our hero fell!
The nun, whose office 'twas, invited
The bearers to the' illustrious dead;
And letters circular indited,
In which this mournful tale I read.
But, to transmit his image down
To generations yet unknown,
A painter, who each beauty knew,
His portraiture from nature drew;
And many a hand, guided by love,
O'er the stretch'd sampler's canvass plain,

In broidery's various colours strove
To raise his form to life again;
Whilst grief, to' assist each artist, came
And painted tears around the frame.
All rites funereal they bestow'd,
Which erst to birds of high renown
The band of Helicon allow'd,
When from the body life was flown.
Beneath a verdant myrtle's shade,
Which o'er the mausoleum spread,
A small sarcophagus was laid,
To keep the ashes of the dead.
On porphyry grav'd in characters
Of gold, with sculptur'd garlands grac'd,
These lines, exciting pity's tears,
Our convent Artemisias plac'd:

'Ye novice nuns, who to this grove repair,
To chat by stealth, unaw'd by age's frown;
Your tongues one moment, if you can, forbear,
Till the sad tale of our affliction's known.
If 'tis too much that organ to restrain,
Use it to speak what anguish death imparts:
One line this cause for sorrow will explain;
Here Ver-Vert lies; and here lie all our hearts.'

'Tis said however (to pursue
My story but a word or two)
The soul of Ver-Vert is not pent
Within the' aforesaid monument,
But, by permission of the fates,
Some holy sister animates;
And will in transmigration run
From time to time, from nun to nun,
Transmitting to all ages hence
In them his deathless eloquence.

SELECT POEMS

OF

WILLIAM THOMPSON:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

THE LIFE

OF

WILLIAM THOMPSON.

WILLIAM THOMPSON is said to have been the second son of the Rev. Francis Thompson, B. D. of Queen's College, Oxford, and vicar of Brough, in Westmoreland, for thirty-two years. William Thompson was born, probably, in the early part of the last century, but the year cannot be ascertained. He was young when, in 1734 and 1736, he wrote Stella, sive Amores, tres libri, and six pastorals; none of which he thought it proper to include in his published works. It was on the banks of the Eden, which runs near Brough, that his Muse was first provoked to numbers, and where, we may suppose, he wrote most of those smaller pieces which he thought worthy of preservation. In these he frequently addresses an Ianthe, who was probably a real mistress. At the usual age, he went to Queen's College, Oxford; and on February 26th, 1738, he took the degree of Master of Arts. He afterwards became a fellow of his college, and succeeded to the livings of South Weston and Hampton Poyle, in Oxfordshire. It was during his residence on his living, that he published his poem, entitled *Sickness*, in 1746. In 1751, he is said to have been an unsuccessful candidate for the poetry professorship against Hawkins. In 1756, he published Gratitude, a poem, on an occasion which certainly required it from every true son of Oxford. In the preceding year, Henrietta Louisa,

countess dowager of Pomfret, daughter of John, baron Jeffrys of Wemin, and relict of Thomas, first earl of Pomfret, presented to the university more than one hundred and thirty statues, &c. which the earl's father, William, baron of Lempster, had purchased from the Arundel collection, and preserved at his seat at Eston Neston, in Northamptonshire. On the 25th February, 1756, this lady received the thanks of the university; and the year following, the university celebrated a public encænia, on which occasion, in an oration by Thomas Warton, professor of poetry, she was again complimented in the most public manner, for her noble and generous benefaction. Besides Thompson, an anonymous Oxonian offered a poetical tribute to her liberality; and in 1760, Mr. Vivian, afterwards King's Professor of Modern History, published a poem on the Pomfret statues. In 1757, Thompson published two volumes, or, as he quaintly terms them, two tomes of poems, by subscription, with prefaces and notes, which give us a very high idea of the author's modesty, piety, and learning. He became afterwards dean of Raphoe in Ireland, where he died some time before the year 1766 or 1767. To his volumes of poems was added, Gondibert and Bertha, a tragedy, the subject taken from Davenant's poem of Gondibert.

Of Thompson's personal character, a very high opinion may be deduced from the general tenor of his acknowledged works. He appears to have been a man of warm affections in the relative duties of life, an ardent admirer of merit, with an humble consciousness of his own defects; a man of real piety, and of various learning. His studies lay much among the ancient English poets, in whose history and writings he was critically skilled. As a poet, although his works have not been popular, he may be allowed to rank above some whose writings have been more anxiously preserv-

ed. Having been in early life an admirer of Spencer, he became a studied imitator of that father of English poetry; but, like most of his imitators, while he adopted his measure, he thought his imitation incomplete without borrowing a greater number of antiquated words and phrases than can be either ornamental or useful. 'I have,' he says in his preface, 'been very sparing of the antiquated words, which are too frequent in most imitations of this author; however, I have introduced a few here and there, which are explained at the bottom of each page where they occur.' But surely it may be asked, why introduce words at all that require explanation; or why are a few unintelligible words, purposely introduced, less blameable than many, used by persons of less judgment? But while Thompson is censurable on this account, it must be allowed that, in his *Nativity*, he has not only imitated but rivalled Spencer in the sweetness and solemnity which belong to his canto. His imagery is, in general, striking and appropriate to the elevated subject; nor is he less happy in his personifications. His *Hymn to May* has received more praise than any of his other pieces. It is certainly more finished, but there are many luxuriances which sober judgment would have removed, and many glittering epithets, and verbal conceits, which proceeded from a memory stored with the ancient poets, and not yet chastened into simplicity by the example and encouragement of the moderns. The poem on Sickness is the longest, and altogether, perhaps, the most successful effort of his muse. He chose a new subject, and I think discovers considerable powers of invention. Particular lines, indeed, may be censured; and of what poem may not this be said? His ardent imagination and strength of feeling sometimes produce swelling words approaching to bombast; his phraseology, too, is sometimes laboured and pedantic; and he

seems, in various instances, more ambitious of the rapturous and animated, than of the mild and simple graces of expression. But, on the other hand, he abounds in original, or at least uncommon thoughts, clothed in vigorous language; he evinces real feeling, the consequence of having suffered what he describes, and having been alternately depressed or elevated by the vicissitudes of a long and dangerous illness. Most of his reflections are natural, and solemnly impressive.

In borrowing the language of Scripture, he has employed it with less change of its original beauty than might have been expected. The poetical beauties of the Palace of Disease, the Delirious Dreams, and the greater part of the fourth book on the Recovery, are such as prove that he had much of the fire and enthusiasm of true genius. Were this poem printed by itself, it could scarcely fail of obtaining popularity among the admirers of Young. Young's Night Thoughts were, at this time, but just published, and perhaps it would be wrong to suppose that Thompson intended to rival him; yet there are passages which strongly remind us of Young's peculiar phraseology: Thompson had read much, and perhaps was unconscious of applying to his own use what he owed to his memory only.

SELECT POEMS.

SICKNESS.

IN FIVE BOOKS.

The Lord comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed; make Thou all his bed in his sickness.

PSALMS.

ARGUMENT.

Subject proposed. The folly of employing poetry on wanton or trifling subjects. Invocation of Urania. Reflections on the instability of life itself: frailness of youth, beauty, and health. The suddenness and first attacks of a distemper, in particular of the small-pox. Moral and religious observations resulting from sickness.

BOOK I.

Of days with pain acquainted, and of nights
Unconscious of the healing balms of sleep,
That burn in wrestless agonies away;
Of Sickness, and its family of woes,
The fellest enemies of life, I sing,
Horizon'd close in darkness. While I touch
The ebon-instrument of solemn tone,
Pluck'd from the cypress' melancholy boughs,
Which, deepening, shade the house of mourning, groans
And hollow wailings, through the damps of night,

Responsive wound the ear. The sprightly powers
Of musical enchantment wave their wings,
And seek the fragrant groves and purple fields,
Where Pleasure rolls her honey-trickling streams
Of blooming Health and laughter-dimpled Joy.
Me other scenes than laughing Joy, and Health
High-blooming, purple-living fields and groves,
Fragrant with spring, invite. Too long the Muse,
Ah! much too long, a libertine, diffus'd
On Pleasure's rosy lap, has idly breath'd
Love-sighing elegies, and pastoral strains,
The soft seducers of our youthful hours,
Soothing away the vigour of the mind,
And energy of virtue. But, farewell,
Ye myrtle walks, ye lily-mantled meads
Of Paphos, and the fount of Acidale,
Where oft, in summer, Grecian fables tell,
The daughters of Eurynome and Jove,
Thalia and her sister Graces, cool
Their glowing features, at the noontide hour,
Farewell!—But come, Urania, from thy bowers
Of everlasting day. O condescend
To lead thy votary (with rapturous zeal
Adoring Nature's God, the great Three-One!)
To Salem; where the Shepherd-Monarch wak'd
The sacred breath of Melody, and swell'd
His harp, to angel's kindred notes attun'd,
With music worthy Heaven! O bathe my breast,
With praises burning, in the morning-dews,
Which sparkle, Sion, on thy holy hill.
The prophets, eagle-eyed, celestial maid,
Those poets of the sky! were taught to chant
The glories of Messiah's reign by thee:
Kindled by thee, the eastern pages flame

With lightning, and with thunder shake the soul;
While, from the whirlwind, God's all-glorious voice
Bursts on the tingling ears of Job: the writ
Of Moses, meek in spirit, but his thoughts
Lofty as Heaven's blue arch. My humble hopes
Aspire but to the alpha of his song;
Where, roll'd in ashes, digging for a grave,
More earnest than the covetous for gold
Or hidden treasures, crusted o'er with boils,
And roaring in the bitterness of soul,
And heart-sick pain, the man of Uz complains.
Themes correspondent to thy servant's theme.
  I sing to you, ye sons of men! of dust,
Say rather: What is man, who proudly lifts
His brow audacious, as confronting Heav'n,
And tramples, with disdain, his mother Earth,
But moulded clay? an animated heap
Of dust, that shortly shall to dust return?
  We dream of shadows, when we talk of life,
Of Pelop's shoulder, of Pythagoras' thigh,
Of Surius's saints, and Ovid's gods;
Mere tales to cheat our children with to rest;
And, when the tale is told, they sink to sleep,
Death's image! so inane is mortal man!
Man's but a vapour, toss'd by every wind,
The child of smoke, which in a moment flies,
And, sinking into nothing, disappears.
Man's a brisk bubble, floating in the waves
Of wide eternity: he dances now
Gay-gilded by the sun (though empty, proud;)
Fantastically fine! and now he drops
In a broad sheet of waters, deep involv'd,
And gives his place to others. O, ye sons
Of Vanity, *remember*, and be wise!

Man is a flower, which, in the morning, fair,
As day-spring, swelling from its slender stem,
In virgin-modesty, and sweet reserve,
Lays out its blushing beauties to the day,
As Gideon's fleece, full with the dews of Heav'n.
But if some ruder gale, or nipping wind,
Disastrous, blow too hard, it, weeping, mourns
In robes of darkness; it reclines its head
In languid softness; withers every grace;
And, ere the ev'ning star the west inflames,
It falls into the portion of those weeds
Which, with a careless hand, we cast away—
Ye thoughtless fair ones, moralize my song!
  Thy pulse beats music; thou art high in health
The rather tremble. When the least we fear,
When Folly lulls us on her couch of down,
And wine and lutes and odours fill the sense
With their soft affluence of bewitching joys;
When years of rapture in thy fancy glow
To entertain thy youth; a sudden burst
Of thunder from the smallest cloud of fate,
Small as the Prophet's hand, destroys, confounds,
And lays thy visionary hopes in dust.
By my example taught, (examples teach
Much more than precepts) learn to know thy End
  The day was Valentine's: when lovers' wound
Afresh begin to bleed, and sighs to warm
The chilly rigour of relenting skies:
Sacred the day to innocence and mirth,
The festival of youth! in seeming health
(As custom bids) I hail'd the Year's fair morn,
And with its earliest purple braid my brows,
The violet, or primrose, breathing sweets
New to the sense. Ianthe by my side,

More lovely than the season! rais'd her voice,
Observant of his rites, in festal lays,
And thus address'd the patron of the Spring:—
'Hail, Valentine! at thy approach benign,
Profuse of gems, the bosom of the Earth
Her fragrant stores unfolds: the fields rejoice,
And, in the infancy of Plenty, smile:
The valleys laugh and sing: the woods, alive,
Sprout into floating verdure, to embower
Those happy lovers, who record thy praise.
'Hail, Valentine! at thy approach benign,
Inhaling genial raptures from the sun,
The plumy nations swell the song of joy,
Thy soaring choristers; the lark, the thrush,
And all the' aërial people, from the wren
And linnet to the eagle, feel the stings
Of amorous delight, and sing thy praise.
'Hail, Valentine! at thy approach benign,
Quick o'er the softening soul the gentle gales
Of spring, awaking bliss, instinctive, move
The ardent youth to breathe the sighs of faith
Into the virgin's heart; who, sick of love,
With equal fires, and purity of truth,
Consenting, blushes while she chants thy praise.'
So sung Ianthe: to my heart I prest
Her spotless sweetness: when, (with wonder, hear!)
Though she shone smiling by, the torpid powers
Of heaviness weigh'd down my beamless eyes,
And press'd them into night. The dews of death
Hung, clammy, on my forehead, like the damps
Of midnight sepulchres; which, silent, op'd
By weeping widows, or by friendship's hand,
Yawn hideous on the moon, and blast the stars
With pestilential reek. My head is torn

With pangs insufferable, pulsive starts,
And pungent aches, grinding through the brain,
To madness hurrying the tormented sense,
And hate of being.—Poor Ianthe wept
In bitterness, and took me by the hand
Compassionately kind: 'Alas! (she cried)
What sudden change is this?—(Again she wept.)
Say, can Ianthe prove the source of pain
To Thomalin? forbid it, gracious Heav'n!—
'No, beauteous Innocence! as soon the rose
Shall poison with its balm; as soon the dove
Become a white dissembler, and the stream
With lulling murmurs, creeping through the grov
Offend the shepherd's slumber.'—Scarce my tongu
These faltering accents stammer'd, down I sink,
And a lethargic stupor steeps my sense
In dull oblivion: till returning Pain,
Too faithful monitor! and dire Disease,
Bid me remember, pleasure is a dream,
That Health has eagle's wings, nor tarries long.
New horrors rise. For in my pricking veins
I feel the forky flame: the rapid flood
Of throbbing life, excursive from the laws
Of sober Nature, and harmonious Health,
Boils in tumultuary eddies round
Its bursting channels. Parching Thirst, anon,
Drinks up the vital maze, as Simois dry,
Or Xanthus, by the arm-ignipotent,
With a red torrent of involving flames
Exhausted; when Achilles with their floods
Wag'd more than mortal war: the god of Fire
Wide o'er the waters pour'd the' inundant blaze,
The shrinking waters to the bottom boil
And hiss in ruin. O! ye rivers, roll

Your cooling crystal o'er my burning breast,
For Etna rages here! ye snows, descend;
Bind me in icy chains, ye northern winds,
And mitigate the furies of the fire!
  Good Heav'n! what hoards of unrepented guilt
Have drawn this vengeance down, have rais'd this fiend
To lash me with his flames? But, O, forgive
My rashness that dares blame Thy just decrees.
It is Thy rod: I kiss it with my heart,
As well as lips: like Aaron's may it bloom
With fruits of goodness: not, like Moses', turn
A serpent; or, to tempt me to accuse
The kind oppression of Thy righteous hand,
Or sting me to despair.—Affliction, hail!
Thou school of virtue! open wide thy gates,
Thy gates of ebony! yet, O, correct
Thy servant, but with judgment, not in wrath,
But with thy mercy, Lord! Thy stripes will heal.
Thus without heresy, afflictions prove
A purgatory; save us as by fire:
And purifying off the dross of sin,
Like old Elijah's chariot, wrap the soul,
On wings of meditation, to the skies.
  In health we have no time to visit truth:
Health's the disease of morals: few in health
Turn o'er the volumes which will make us wise.
What are ye, now, ye tuneful triflers! once
The eager solace of my easy hours,
Ye dear deluders or of Greece or Rome,
Anacreon, Horace, Virgil, Homer, what?
The gay, the bright, the sober, the sublime?
And ye of softer strain, ye amorous fools,
Correctly indolent, and sweetly vain,

Tibullus, Ovid; and the female verse
Of her, who, plunging from Leucadia's heights,
Extinguish'd, with her life, her hopeless fires,
Or rose a swan, as love-struck fancy deem'd.
Who would not, in these hours of wisdom, give
A vatican of wits for one Saint Paul?
Dare Tully with the golden mouth of Greece,
With Chrysostom in rhetoric-thunder join,
Adventurous, now? as soon the feeble sound,
Salmoneus, of thy brazen bridge contends
With Jove's ethereal peal, and bursting roar
Fulminous, rending earth, o'erturning air,
And shaking Heaven. Or shall the pointed pen
Of Corduba*, with hostile labour bend
Its sentences obscure against the force
Of Hierom's noble fire? As soon the moon
With blunted horn, dares pour her pallid beam
Against the boundless majesty of day,
The Sun's refulgent throne; when, high, in noon
He kindles up the Earth to light and joy.
My best instructor, Sickness, shuts the eye
From vanity; she draws the curtains round
The couch, nor gives admittance to the World;
But to Harpocrates consigns the door,
And, silent, whispers me, that 'Life is vain.'
  If Life be vain, on what shall man depend?
Depend on Virtue. Virtue is a rock
Which stands for ever; braves the frowning flood,
And rears its awful brow, direct, to Heaven.
Though Virtue save not from the grave, she gives
Her votaries to the stars; she plucks the sting

* Seneca was born at Corduba in Spain.

From the grim King of Terrors; smooths the bed
Of anguish, and bids Death, though dreadful, smile.
Death smiles on Virtue: and his visage, black,
Yet comely seems. A Christian scorns the bounds
Where limited creation said to Time,
'Here I have end.' Rapturous, he looks beyond
Or Time or Space; he triumphs o'er decay;
And fills Eternity: the next to God!

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

NOTES AND ALLUSIONS

TO BOOK I.

PAGE 293. *Pluck'd from the cypress, &c.*—Thus Horace:

Barbiton hic paries habebit. *Lib.* iii. *Ode* 26.

And, a greater than Horace in lyric poetry, the royal Psalmist, represents the same image.—'As for our harps, we hanged them upon the trees that are therein.' *Psalm* cxxxvii. 2.

P. 294. *Paphos.*—A city of Cyprus; formerly dedicated to Venus.

P. 294. *Acidale.*—A fountain in Orchomenus, a city of Bœotia, where the Graces were supposed to bathe themselves. The genealogy of the Graces is very diversely related. But Hesiod says, 'they were the offspring of Jupiter and Eurynome.' *Theog.*

P. 295. *Burst on the tingling ears of Job, &c.*—The Book of Job is ascribed to various authors, and amongst the rest to Moses. I am proud to observe, that Dr. Young has strengthened this opinion in his Notes to his admirable poem on Job. Most of the arguments on each side of the question may be found in Poole's Synopsis Critic, in the beginning of his Notes on the Book of Job; and in Mr. S. Wesley's curious dissertation on the same subject.

P. 295. *We dream of shadows, when we talk of life.*—

Σκιας ονας ανθρωποι. *Pind. Pith. Ode* 8.

Sophocles has much the same thought in his Ajax; and, to dignify the sentiment, he puts it into the mouth of Ulysses:

> Ορω γαρ ημας ειδεν οντας αλλο πλην
> Ειδωλ' οσοι περ ζωμεν, η κενφην σκιαν.

The Scholiast observes, that he borrowed the sentiment from Pindar.

P. 295. *We dream, &c. of Pelops' shoulder.*—The poets feign that Tantalus served up his son Pelops to the table of the gods: they re-united the fragments, and formed his shoulder, which was lost, of ivory. *Ovid. Met. Lib.* vi.

> —Humeroque Pelops insignis eburno.
> *Virg. Georg.* iii.

I shall add this beautiful passage from Tibullus:

> ———Carmina ni sint,
> Ex humero Pelopis non nitiuisset ebur.
> *Lib.* i. *Eleg.* 4.

P. 295. *Of Pythagoras' thigh.*—This is told with so much humour by Mr. Addison in one of his finest works, that I rather choose to give an authority from him, than any of the ancients. 'The next man astonished the whole table with his appearance: he was slow, solemn, and silent in his behaviour, and wore a raiment curiously wrought with hieroglyphics. As he came into the middle of the room, he threw back the skirt of it, and discovered a golden thigh. Socrates, at the sight of it, declared against keeping company with any who were not made of flesh and blood; and therefore desired Diogenes the Laertian to lead him to the apartment allotted the fabulous heroes, and worthies of dubious existence,' &c.

The Table of Fame, Tatler, Vol. ii. No. 81.

P. 295. *Of Surius's Saints.*—Surius writ the voluminous legend of the Romish Saints, in six volumes in folio. Dr. Donne, in his Satires, has given him this character:

> ——————outlie either
> Jovius, or Surius, or both together. *Sat.* 4.

P. 296. *Ianthe by my side.*—Sickness being a subject so disagreeable in itself to human nature, it was thought necessary, as Fable is the soul of Poetry, to relieve the imagination with the following, and some other episodes. For to describe the anguish of a distemper, without a mixture of some more pleasing incidents, would, no doubt, disgust every good-natured and tender reader.

P. 300. *Salmoneus, of thy brazen bridge, &c.*—Salmoneus, King of Elis, a province in the Peloponnesus. He was so arrogant as to affect being thought a god: for which end he built a bridge of brass, by driving over which in his chariot, he endeavoured to make himself be believed the Thunderer. But Jupiter, enraged at his impiety, struck him dead with a real thunderbolt.

> Vidi et crudeles dantem Salmonea pœnas,
> Dum flammas Jovis et sonitus imitatur Olympi.—
> Demens! qui nimbos, et non imitabile fulmen
> Ære et cornipedum cursu imitarat equorum.
> *Virg. Æn. Lib.* 4.

P. 300. *But to Harpocrates consigns the door.*—Harpocrates, the god of Silence amongst the Egyptians.

> Si quiequam tacite commissum est fido ab amico,
> Me unum esse invenies illorum jure sacratum,
> Corneli, et factum esse puta Harpocratem. *Catull.*

Hence Erasmus, Lib. Adag. tells us, that 'reddere Harpocratem,' is the same as 'mutum reddere.' So Catullus in another place:

Patruum reddidit Harpocratem.

Ovid describes him in the same manner, without taking notice of his name, amongst the attendants of Isis:

Quique premit vocem, digitoque silentia suadet.
Metam. Lib. ix.

This description entirely agrees with the several medals and statues of Harpocrates, which the learned antiquary Gisb. Cuperus exhibits in his laborious Dissertation on that subject, printed with Monumenta Antiqua.

But upon another account likewise, Harpocrates may justly be appointed to attend upon the Sick; for he is numbered amongst the salutary gods, who assisted in extreme dangers: as appears from Artemidorus, Oneir. l. ii. c. 44. where, after having mentioned Serapis, Isis, Anubis, and Harpocrates, he goes on thus: 'Semper enim servatores crediti sunt hi dii, eorum qui per omnia exercitati sunt, et ad extremum periculum pervenerunt,' &c. Kircher also, in his Œdip. Egyp. p. 2. vol. ii. p. 315, amongst others to the same purpose, has these remarkable words: 'Reverebantur Ægypti, præter cætera numina maximè Isin et Osirin, ac horum sive Harpocratem, tanquam Iatricos, genios.'

THE

PALACE OF DISEASE.

Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear.

Milton.

ARGUMENT.

Reflections. Invocation of the Genius of Spenser. Apostrophe to the Duchess of Somerset. The palace of Disease. War. Intemperance. Melancholy. Fever. Consumption. Small-Pox. Complaint on the death of Lord Beauchamp.

BOOK II.

Death was not man's inheritance, but Life
Immortal, but a paradise of bliss,
Unfading beauty, and eternal spring;
(The cloudless blaze of Innocence's reign)
The gifts of God's right hand! till monstrous Sin,
The motley child of Satan and of Hell,
Invited dire Disease into the world,
And her distorted brood of ugly shapes,
Echidna's brood! and fix'd their curs'd abode
On earth, invisible to human sight,
The portion and the scourge of mortal man.

Yet though to human sight invisible,
If she, whom I implore, Urania, deign
With euphrasy to purge away the mists
Which, humid, dim the mirror of the mind;
(As Venus gave Æneas to behold
The angry gods with flame o'erwhelming Troy,
Neptune and Pallas,) not in vain, I'll sing
The mystic terrors of this gloomy reign:
And, led by her, with dangerous courage press
Through dreary paths, and haunts, by mortal foot
Rare visited; unless by Thee, I ween,
Father of Fancy, of descriptive verse,
And shadowy beings, gentle Edmund, hight
Spenser! the sweetest of the tuneful throng,
Or recent, or of eld.* Creative bard,
Thy springs unlock, expand thy fairy scenes,
Thy unexhausted stores of fancy spread,
And with thy images enrich my song.
Come Hertford!† with the Muse, awhile, vouch-
(The softer virtues melting in thy breast, [safe
The tender graces glowing in thy form)
Vouchsafe, in all the beauty of distress,
To take a silent walk among the tombs:
There lend a charm to sorrow, smooth her brow,
And sparkle through her tears, in shining woe,
As when the dove,‡ (thy emblem, matchless Dame!
For beauty, innocence, and truth are thine)
Spread all its colours o'er the boundless deep,
(Empyreal radiance quivering round the gloom)
Chaos reform'd, and bade Distraction smile!

* Old. † Afterwards Duchess of Somerset.

‡ The Platonists suppose that Love, or the celestial Venus (of whom the dove is likewise an emblem) created the world out of chaos.

Deep in a desert vale, a palace frowns
Sublimely mournful: to the eye it seems
The mansion of Despair, or ancient Night.
The Graces of the Seasons never knew
To shed their bounty here, or smiling, bless,
With hospitable foot, its bleak domain,
Uncultivated. Nor the various robe
Of flushing Spring, with purple gay, invests
Its blighted plains; nor Summer's radiant hand
Profusive, scatters o'er its baleful fields
The rich abundance of her glorious days;
And golden Autumn here forgets to reign.
Here only hemlock, and whatever weeds
Medea gather'd, or Canidia brew'd,
Wet with Avernus' waves, or Pontus yields,
Or Colchos, or Thessalia, taint the winds,
And choke the ground unhallow'd. But the soil
Refuses to embrace the kindly seeds
Of healing vegetation, sage, and rue,
Dittany, and Amello, blooming still
In Virgil's rural page. The bitter yew, [arms,
The church-yard's shade! and cypress' wither'd
In formidable ranks surround its courts
With umbrage dun; administering a roof
To birds of ominous portent; the bat,
The raven boding death, the screaming owl
Of heavy wing, while serpents, rustling, hiss,
And croaking toads the odious concert aid.
The peevish east, the rheumy south, the north
Pregnant with storms, are all the winds that blow:
While, distant far, the pure Etesian gales,
And western breezes, fan the spicy beds
Of Araby the blest, or shake their balm
O'er fair Britannia's plains, and wake her flowers.

Eternal damps, and deadly humours, drawn
In poisonous exhalations from the deep,
Conglomerated into solid night,
And darkness, almost to be felt, forbid
The sun, with cheerful beams, to purge the air,
But roll their suffocating horrors round
Incessant, banishing the blooming train
Of Health, and Joy, for ever, from the dome.
  In sad magnificence the palace rears
Its mouldering columns; from thy quarries, Nile,
Of sable marble, and Egyptian mines
Embowel'd. Nor Corinthian pillars, gay
With foliag'd capitals and figur'd prize,
Nor feminine Ionique, nor, though grave,
The fluted Doric, and the Tuscan plain,
In just proportions rise: but Gothic, rude,
Irreconcil'd in ruinous design:
Save in the centre, in relievo high,
And swelling emblematically bold,
In gold the apple rose,* 'whose mortal taste
Brought Death into the world, and all our woe.'
Malignantly delighted, dire Disease
Surveys the glittering pest, and grimly smiles
With hellish glee. Beneath, totters her throne,
Of jarring elements; earth, water, fire;
Where hot and cold, and moist and dry, maintain
Unnatural war. Shapeless her frightful form,
(A chaos of distemper'd limbs in one)
Huge as Megæra, cruel as the grave,
Her eyes, two comets; and her breath, a storm.
High in her wither'd arms, she wields her rod,
With adders curl'd and dropping gore; and points

* Milton's Paradise Lost, Book 1.

To the dead walls, besmear'd with cursed tales
Of plagues red-spotted, of blue pestilence,
Walking in darkness; Havoc at their heels;
Lean Famine, knawing in despite her arm:
Whatever Egypt, Athens, or Messine,
Constantinople, Troynovant, Marseilles,
Or Cairo felt, or Spagnolet could paint.
A sickly taper, glimmering feeble rays
Across the gloom, makes horror visible,
And punishes, while it informs, the eye.
A thousand and ten thousand monstrous shapes
Compose the group; the execrable crew
Which Michael, in vision strange, disclos'd
To Adam, in the lazar-house of woe;
A colony from Hell. The knotted Gout,
The bloated Dropsy, and the racking Stone
Rolling her eyes in anguish; Lepra foul,
Strangling Angina; Ephialtic starts;
Unnerv'd Paralysis; with moist Catarrhs;
Pleuritis bending o'er its side, in pain;
Vertigo; murderous Apoplexy, proud
With the late spoils of Clayton's honoured life:
Clayton, the good, the courteous, the humane;
Tenacious of his purpose, and his word
Firm as the fabled throne of Grecian Jove.
Be just, O Memory! again recal
Those looks illumin'd by his honest heart,
That open freedom, and that cheerful ease,
The bounteous emanations of his soul:
His British honour; Christian charity;
And mild benevolence for human-kind.
From every quarter, lamentations loud
And sighs resound, and rueful peals of groans
Roll echoing round the vaulted dens, and screams

Dolorous, wrested from the heart of Pain,
And brain-sick Agony. Around her throne
Six favourite furies, next herself accurst,
Their dismal mansions keep; in order each,
As most destructive. In the foremost rank,
Of polish'd steel, with armour blood-distain'd,
Helmets and spears, and shields, and coats of mail,
With iron stiff, or tin, or brass, or gold,
Swells a triumphal arch; beneath grim War
Shakes her red arm: for War is a disease,
The fellest of the fell! Why will mankind,
Why will they, when so many plagues involve
This habitable globe, (the curse of Sin)
Invent new desolations to cut off
The Christian race? At least in Christian climes
Let olives shade your mountains, and let Peace
Stream her white banner o'er us, blest from War,
And laurels only deck your poet's brows.
Or, if the fiery metal in your blood,
And thirst of human-life, your bosom sting,
Too savage! let the fury loose of War,
And bid the battle rage against the breasts
Of Asian infidels: redeem the towers
Where David sung, the son of David bled;
And warm new Tasso's with the epic-flame.
  Right opposite to War a gorgeous throne
With jewels flaming, and emboss'd with gold,
And various sculpture, strikes the wondering eye
With jovial scenes (amid destruction gay)
Of instruments of mirth, the harp, the lute,
Of costly viands, of delicious wines,
And flowery wreaths to bind the careless brow
Of Youth, or Age; as Youth or Age demand
The pleasing ruin from the' enchantress, vile

Intemperance: than Circè subtler far,
Only subdued by Wisdom; fairer far
Than young Armida, whose bewitching charms
Rinaldo fetter'd in her rosy chains;
Till, by Ubaldo held, his diamond shield
Blaz'd on his mind the virtues of his race,
And, quick, dissolv'd her wanton mists away.
See, from her throne, slow-moving, she extends
A poison'd goblet! fly the beauteous bane:
The adder's tooth, the tiger's hungry fang,
Are harmless to her smiles; her smiles are death.
Beneath the foamy lustre of the bowl,
Which sparkles men to madness, lurks a snake
Of mortal sting: fly: if you taste the wine,
Machaon swears that moly cannot cure.
Though innocent and fair her looks, she holds
A lawless commerce with her sister Pests,
And doubly whets their darts: away—and live.
  Next, in a low-brow'd cave, a little hell,
A pensive hag, moping in darkness, sits
Dolefully sad: her eyes (so deadly dull!)
Stare from their stonied sockets, widely wild;
For ever bent on rusty knives and ropes;
On poniards, bowls of poison, daggers red
With clotted gore. A raven by her side
Eternal croaks; her only mate Despair;
Who, scowling in a night of clouds, presents
A thousand burning hells, and damned souls,
And lakes of stormy fire, to mad the brain
Moon-strucken. Melancholy is her name;
Britannia's bitter bane. Thou gracious Power,
(Whose judgments and whose mercies who can [tell!)
With bars of steel, with hills of adamant
Crush down the sooty fiend; nor let her blast

The sacred light of Heaven's all-cheering face,
Nor fright, from Albion's isle, the angel Hope.
  Fever the fourth: adust as Afric wilds,
Chain'd to a bed of burning brass: her eyes
Like roving meteors blaze, nor ever close
Their wakeful lids: she turns, but turns in vain,
Through nights of misery. Attendant Thirst
Grasps hard an empty bowl, and shrivel'd strives
To drench her parched throat. Not louder groans
From Phalaris's bull, as fame reports,
Tormented with distressful din the air,
And drew the tender tear from pity's eye.
  Consumption near; a joyless, meagre wight,
Panting for breath, and shrinking into shade,
Eludes the grasp: thin as the' embodied air
Which, erst, deceiv'd Ixion's void embrace,
Ambitious of a goddess! scarce her legs
Feebly she drags, with wheezing labour, on,
And motion slow; a willow wand directs
Her tottering steps, and marks her for the grave.
  The last, so turpid to the view, affrights
Her neighbour hags. Happy herself is blind,
Or madness would ensue; so bloated-black,
So loathsome to each sense, the sight or smell,
Such foul corruption on this side the grave;
Variola yclep'd; ragged, and rough, [scenes
Her couch perplex'd with thorns.—What heavy
Hang o'er my heart to feel the theme is mine!
But Providence commands; His will be done!
She rushes through my blood; she burns along,
And riots on my life.—Have mercy, Heav'n!—
Variola, what art thou? whence proceeds
This virulence, which all, but we, escape?
Thou nauseous enemy to human kind:

In man, and man alone, thy mystic seeds,
Quiet, and in their secrets windings hid,
Lie unprolific; till Infection rouse
Her poisonous particles, of proper size,
Figure, and measure, to exert their power
Of impregnation; atoms subtle, barb'd,
Infrangible, and active to destroy;
By geometric or mechanic rules
Yet undiscover'd: quick the leaven runs,
Destructive of the solids, spirits, blood
Of mortal man, and agitates the whole
In general conflagration and misrule.
As when the flinty seeds of fire embrace
Some fit materials, stubble, furze, or straw,
The crackling blaze ascends; the rapid flood
Of ruddy flames, impetuous o'er its prey,
Rolls its broad course, and half the field devour
As adders deaf to Beauty, Wit, and Youth,
How many living lyres, by thee unstrung,
Ere half their tunes are ended, cease to charm
The admiring world? So ceas'd the matchless na
By Cowley honour'd, by Roscommon lov'd,
Orinda:* blooming Killigrew's soft lay:
And manly Oldham's pointed vigour, curs'd
By the gor'd sons of Loyola and Rome.
And he who Phædra sung, in buskin'd pomp,
Mad with incestuous fires, ingenious Smith:
Oxonia's sons! And, O, our recent grief!
Shall Beauchamp† die, forgotten by the Muse,
Or are the Muses with their Hertford dumb?
Where are ye? weeping o'er thy learned Rhine

* Mrs. Katharine Philips.

† Lord Beauchamp, only son of the Earl of Hertford, died Bolognia, of the small-pox, Sept. 11th, 1744, aged 19.

Bononia, fatal to our hopes! or else
By Kennet's chalky wave, with tresses torn,
Or rude, and wildly floating to the winds,
Mute, on the hoary willows hang the lyre,
Neglected? or in rural Percy-lodge,
Where Innocence and he walk'd hand in hand,
The cypress crop, or weave the laurel-bough
To grace his honour'd grave? Ye lilies, rise
Immaculate; ye roses, sweet as morn;
Less sweet and less immaculate than he.
His opening flower of Beauty softly smil'd,
And, sparkling in the liquid dews of Youth,
Adorn'd the blessed light! with blossoms fair,
Untainted; in the rank Italian soil
From blemish pure. The virgins stole a sigh,
The matrons lifted up their wondering eyes,
And blest the English angel as he pass'd,
Rejoicing in his rays! Why did we trust
A plant so lovely to their envious skies,
Unmercifully bright with savage beams?
His were the arts of Italy before,
Courting, and courted by the classic Muse.
He travel'd not to learn, but to reform,
And with his fair example mend mankind.
Why need I name (for distant nations know,
Hesperia knows; O would Hesperia sing!
As Maro erst, and late Marino rais'd
The blooming Beauchamps of the former times,
Marcellus and Adonis, to the stars,
On wings of soaring fire! so would she sing!)
His uncorrupted heart; his honour clear
As summer-suns, effulging forth his soul
In every word and look: his reason's ray
By folly, vanity, or vice unstain'd,

Shining at once with purity and strength,
With English honesty, and Attic fire:
His tenderness of spirit, high inform'd
With wide benevolence, and candid zeal
For learning, liberty, religion, truth:
The patriot-glories burning in his breast,
His king's and country's undivided friend!
Each public virtue, and each private grace;
The Seymour dignity, the Percy flame;
All, all!—ere twenty autumns roll'd away
Their golden plenty. Further still! behold
His animated bloom; his flush of health;
The blood exulting with the balmy tide
Of vernal life! so fresh for pleasure form'd
By Nature and the graces: yet his youth
So temperately warm, so chastely cool,
Ev'n seraphims might look into his mind,
Might look, nor turn away their holy eyes!
The' unutterable essence of good Heav'n,
That breath of God, that energy divine
Which gives us to be wise, and just, and pure,
Full on his bosom pour'd the living stream,
Illum'd, inspir'd, and sanctified his soul!
And are these wonders vanished? are those eyes,
Where ardent truth, and melting mildness shone,
Clos'd in a foreign land? no more to bless
A father, mother, friend! no more to charm
A longing people? O lamented youth!
Since fate and gloomy night thy beauties veil'd
With shade mysterious, and eclips'd thy beams,
How many Somersets are lost in thee!
Yet only lost to earth!—For, trust the Muse,
(His virtues rather trust) she saw him rise,
She saw him smile along the tissued clouds,

In colours rich-embroider'd by the sun,
Engirt with cherub wings, and kindred forms,
Children of light, the spotless youth of Heav'n!
They hail their blest companion, gain'd so soon
A partner of their joys; and crown with stars,
Almost as fair, the radiance of his brows.
Ev'n where the angel host, with tongues of fire,
Chant to their glittering harps the' Almighty's
praise,
And, in a burning circle, shoot around
The jasper throne, he mingles flames with them;
He springs into the centre of the choir,
And, drinking in the spirit most divine,
He sings as sweet, and glows as bright as they.

NOTES AND ALLUSIONS

TO BOOK II.

PAGE 307. *With euphrasy, Angl. eyebright.*—This herb was unknown to the ancients; at least, it is not mentioned by them. It is of extraordinary service to the eye, curing most of its distempers.

> — Cum debilitat morbi vis improba visum,
> Aut vinum, aut cœcus, luminis osor, amor, &c.
> Tunc ego, non frustra, vocor—
>
> *Coulchus, Lib. Plant. p. 39.*

> ——— Purg'd with euphrasy and rue
> The visual nerve. *Milton.*

P. 307. *As Venus gave Æneas to behold, &c.*—See Virgil. Æn. Lib. ii. which seems to be borrowed from Homer, Ilias. Lib. v. We have several of the like instances in the sacred volumes. Gen. xxi. 19: 'And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water.' Numbers xxii. 31: 'Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaâm, and he saw the Angel of the Lord,' &c.

P. 307. ——— *by mortal foot*
Rare visited.—See Virgil:

> Sed me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
> Raptat amor: juvat ire jugis, qua nulla priorum,
> Castaliam molli divertitur orbita clivo.
>
> *Georg. Lib. iii.*

Which is imitated from Lucretius, Lib. ii.

> Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
> Trita pede, &c.

P. 307. ——— *gentle Edmund, hight*
Spenser!—The date of our English poetry may with great justice begin with Spenser. It is

true, Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate were masters of uncommon beauties, considering the age they lived in, and have described the humours, passions, &c. with great discernment. Yet none of them seem to have been half so well acquainted with the very life and being of poetry, invention, painting, and design, as Spenser. Chaucer was the best before him; but then he borrowed most of his poems either from the ancients, or from Boccace, Petrarch, or the Provençal writers, &c. Thus his Troilus and Cressida, the largest of his works, was taken from Lollius; and the Romaunt of the Rose, was translated from the French of John de Meun, an Englishman, who flourished in the reign of Richard II. and so of the rest. As for those who followed him, such as Heywood, Scogan, Skelton, &c. they seem to be wholly ignorant of either numbers, language, propriety, or even decency itself. I must be understood to except the Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wiat, Sir Philip Sidney, several pieces in the Mirror of Magistrates, and a few parts of Mr. G. Gascoigne's and Turbervill's works.

P. 308. *Medea gather'd and Canidia brew'd, &c.*—Medea, notorious for her incantations in Ovid, &c. as Canidia in Horace.

P. 308. ——— *Or Pontus yields, &c.*—Pontus, Colchos, and Thessalia, well known for producing noxious and poisonous herbs and plants.

> Has herbas, atque hæc Ponto mihi lecta venena,
> Ipse dedit Mœris; nascuntur plurima Ponto.
> *Virg. Eclog. 8.*

> Herbasque, quas et Colchos, atque Iberia
> Mittit venenorum ferax. *Hor. Epod. 5.*

> Thessala quinetiam tellus herbasque nocentes,
> Rupibus ingenuit. Lucan, Lib. v.

P. 308. *Amello blooming still*
In Virgil's rural page.—

Est etiam flos in pratis, cui nomen Amello
Fecere agricolæ. *Virg. Georg. Lib. vi.*

Besides there grows a flower in marshy ground,
Its name Amellus, easy to be found:
A mighty spring works in its root, and cleaves
The sprouting stalk, and shows itself in leaves.
The flower itself is of a golden hue,
The leaves inclining to a darker blue, &c.
Addison's Works, Vol. i. 4to.

P. 310. ——— *or Spagnolet could paint.*—A famous painter, eminent for drawing the distresses and agonies of human nature.

P. 310. *Which Michael in vision strange.*—See Milton's Paradise Lost, B. xi.

P. 310. ——*Clayton's honoured life.*—Sir William Clayton, Bart. died at Marden in Surrey, December the 28th, 1744.

P. 311. *Where David sung, &c.*—Though a Crusade may seem very romantic (and perhaps it is so) yet it has been applauded by the greatest writers of different ages; by Æneas Sylvius, by Bessarion, by Naugerius, &c. who have each writ Orations upon that subject. And here I cannot help observing, that Casimire and Jac. Baldè, the two most celebrated of the modern Lyric Poets, have writ several of their finest Odes to animate the Christian princes to such a design; and that Tasso has adorned the Expedition of Godfrey of Bulloign with the most beautiful and perfect poem since the Æneis: for I prefer Milton to Virgil himself.

P. 312. *Than Circè subtler far.*—See Homer's Odyssey, Lib. x.

P. 312. *Than young Armida, &c.*—See Tasso's Il Godfredo, Canto iv. Stanz. 29, &c. Canto xiv. Stanz. 68. Canto xvi. Stanz. 29.

P. 312. *Machaon swears, &c.*—Machaon, celebrated in Homer; but here used, in general, for any physician. So Ovid:

> Firma valent per se, nuleumque Machaona quærunt.

And Martial:

> Quid tibi cum medicis? dimitte Machaonas omnes.

P. 312. *That moly cannot cure.*—Mercury is said to have presented moly to Ulysses, to preserve him from the charms of Circè. *Homer's Odyss. Lib.* x.

> Thus while he spoke, the sovereign plant he drew,
> Where on the' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew.
> And show'd its nature and its wondrous power;
> Black was the root, but milky white the flow'r:
> Moly the name. *Pope.*

'Laudatissima herbarum est Homero, quam vocari à diis putat moly, et inventionem ejus Mercurio assignat, contraque summa veneficia demonstrat,' &c. *Plinius, Lib.* xxv. *C.* 4.

P. 313. *From Phalaris's bull, &c.*—Amongst several instruments of torment that Phalaris caused to be contrived, there was a bull of brass, in which people being cast and a fire placed under it, they bellowed like oxen. Perillus the artist, demanding a great reward for his invention, was put in it himself to try the first experiment. Upon which Pliny makes this good-natured reflection: 'Perillum nemo laudat, sæviorem Phalaride tyranno, qui taurum fecit, mugitus hominis pollicitus, igne subdito, et primus eum expertus cruciatum justiore sævitia,' &c. *Plinius, Lib.* xxxiv. *C.* 8.

P. 313. ——— *deceiv'd Ixion's void embrace.*—Ixion being invited to dine with Jupiter, fell in love with Juno, and endeavoured to debauch her,

who acquainted her husband. He, to try Ixion, formed a cloud into Juno's likeness, upon which he satisfied his lust. *Hygini Fab. Diodor.* vi. *&c.*

P. 314. *Orinda.*—Mrs. K. Philips, styled the matchless Orinda. See her Poems in folio. Cowley has two Odes upon her, in the second volume of his Works, 8vo.

P. 314. *Blooming Killigrew's soft lay.*—See her Poems in 4to. Mr. Dryden celebrates her death in an excellent Ode. See his works, vol. iii. folio, p. 106. See likewise Wood's Athenæ Oxon. vol. ii.

P. 314. *Loyola.*—Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits; against whom Mr. Oldham writ those Satires, which are the best of his works.

P. 315. *Bononia, fatal to our hopes.*—Bolognia, a city in Italy, the first school of the Lombard painters, and a famous University,

> ——Parvique Bononia Rheni.
>
> *Sillius Ital. Lib.* viii.

P. 315. *And bless'd the English Angel as he pass'd.*—At Bolognia he went by the name of L'Angelo Inglese. The same compliment seems to have been paid by that people to our great Milton in his travels, as we learn by this Epigram of a learned Italian nobleman in the second volume of Milton's poetical works:

> Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
> Non Anglus, verum herele Angelus, ipse, fores.

P. 316. *O lamented youth, &c.*—

> Heu, miserande puer! si qua fata aspera rumpas,
> Tu Marcellus eris.————
> Sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbre.
>
> *Virg. Æn. Lib.* vi.

THE

PROGRESS OF SICKNESS.

When I waited for light there came darkness.
My skin is black upon me; and my bones are burnt with heat.
My harp also is turned to mourning.

JOB.

ARGUMENT.

Reflections. The progress of Disease. Blindness. Delirious dreams. Remedies for the mind: Patience—Hope—Prayer. Human aid and relief in Sickness. Physic; eulogium on that science—Friends; digression on friendship.

BOOK. III.

The fair, the bright, the great, alas! are fall'n,
Nipt in the bloom of beauty, wit, and youth,
Death's undistinguish'd prey. Shall I complain
(When such the' establish'd ordinance of Heav'n)
If Sickness at my bosom lay the siege?
A worm to them! and to their light a shade,
Ungilded with one beam, which melted down
The tear fast trickling o'er thy honour'd tombs:

We all must die! Our every pulse that beats,
Beats toward eternity, and tolls our doom.
  Fate reigns in all the portions of the year.
The fruits of Autumn feed us for disease;
The winter's raw inclemencies bestow
Disease on Death; while Spring, to strew our hearse
Kindly unbosoms, weeping in their dews,
Her flowery race! and Summer (kinder still)
With the green turf and brambles binds our graves.
  But am I wake? or in Ovidian realms,
And Circè holds the glass? What odious change,
What metamorphose strikes the dubious eye?
Ah, whither is retir'd the scarlet wave, [cheek,
Mantling with health, which floated through the
From the strong summer-beam imbib'd? And where
The vernal lily's softly-blended bloom?
The forehead roughens to the wondering hand.
Wide o'er the human field, the body, spreads
Contagious war, and lays its beauties waste.
As once thy breathing harvest, Cadmus, sprung,
Sudden, a serpent brood! an armed crop
Of growing chiefs, and fought themselves to death.
One black-incrusted bark of gory boils,
One undistinguish'd blister, from the sole
Of the sore foot, to the head's sorer crown.
Job's punishment! With patience like his own,
O may I exercise my wounded soul,
And cast myself upon his healing hand,
Who bruiseth at his will, and maketh whole.
  Ah, too, the lustre of the eyes is fled!
Heavy and dull, their orbs neglect to roll,
In motionless distortion stiff and fix'd;
Till by the trembling hand of watchful Age
(A weeping matron, timorous to affright,

And piously fallacious in her care,
Pretending light offensive, and the sun)
Clos'd; and, perhaps, for ever! ne'er again
To open on the sphere, to drink the day,
Or (worse!) behold Ianthe's face divine,
And wonder o'er her charms.—But yet forbear;
O dare not murmur; 'tis Heaven's high behest:
Though darkness through the chambers of the grave
This dust pursue, and Death's sad shade involve,
Ere long, the filial light himself shall shine;
(The stars are dust to him, the sun a shade)
These very eyes, these tunicles of flesh,
Ev'n though by worms destroy'd, shall see my God,
And, seeing, ne'er remember darkness more,
Environ'd with eternity of day.

Though, at their visual entrance, quite shut out
External forms, forbidden, mount the winds,
Retire to chaos, or with night commix;
Yet, fancy's mimic work, ten thousand shapes,
Antic and wild, rush sweeping o'er my dreams,
Irregular and new; as pain or ease
The spirits teach to flow, and in the brain
Direction diverse hold: gentle and bright
As hermits sleeping in their mossy cells,
Lull'd by the fall of waters! by the rills
From Heliconian cliffs devolv'd; or where
Thy ancient river, Kishon, sacred stream!
Soft murmurs on their slumbers: peace within,
And conscience, ev'n to ecstacy sublim'd
And beatific vision. Sudden, black,
And horrible as murderers; or hags,
Their lease of years spun out, and bloody bond
Full flashing on their eyes; the gulf, beneath,

Maddening with gloomy fires; and Heaven, behind,
With all her golden valves for ever clos'd.
  Now in Elysium lap'd, and lovely scenes,
Where honeysuckles rove, and eglantines,
Narcissus, jess'min, pinks, profusely wild,
In every scented gale Arabia breathe:
As blissful Eden fair; the morning-work
Of Heaven, and Milton's theme! where innocence
Smil'd, and improv'd the prospect.—Now, anon,
By Isis' favourite flood supinely laid,
In tuneful indolence, behold the bards
(Harps in each hand, and laurel on each brow)
A band of demi-gods, august to sight,
In venerable order sweetly rise,
(The Muses sparkling round them) who have trod
In measur'd pace its banks, for ever green,
Enamel'd from their feet! Harmonious notes,
Warbled to Doric reeds, to Lesbian lyres,
Or Phrygian minstrelsy, steal on the ear
Enamour'd with variety: and loud
The trumpets shrilling clangors fill the sky
With silver melody.—Now, happier still!
Round thy Italic cloisters, musing slow,
Or in sweet converse with thy letter'd sons,
Philosophers, and poets, and divines,
Enjoy the sacred walk, delighted, Queen's!*
Where Addison and Tickell lay inspir'd,
Inebriated from the classic springs,
And tun'd to various-sounding harps the song,
Sublime or tender, humorous or grave,
Quaffing the Muses' nectar to their fill.

* Queen's College in Oxford.

Where Smith in hoary reverence presides,
(Crown'd with the snow of virtue for the skies)
With graceful gravity, and gentle sway;
With perfect peace encircled and esteem.
Whose mild and bright benevolence of soul,
By reason cool, and by religion warm,
And generous passion for the college-weal,
More than a Muse inspire.—Momental bliss!
For sudden rapt, the midnight howl of wolves,
The dragon's yell, the lion's roar, astound
My trembling ear. Ha! down a burning mount
I plunge deep, deep: sure Vulcan's shop is here—
Hark, how the anvils thunder round the dens
Flammivomous! What? are those chains to bind
This skeleton! the Cyclops must be mad:
Those bolts of steel, those adamantine links
Demand Typhæus' strength to burst.—Away—
Venus and Mars—beware.—In giddy whirls
I ride the blast, and towering through the storm
Enjoy the palace of the morn. The Sun
Resigns the reins of Phlegon to my hands:
His name waves fire: he scorches me to dust:
Avaunt, thou fiend!—I'll hurl thee down the deep
Of Heaven, with bolted thunder, and enwrapt
With forky lightning.—Now staggering I reel,
By murderers pursued: my faithless feet
Scarce shift their pace: or down rushing amain,
I cease to recollect my steps, and roll
Passive on earth.—Sure, 'twas Astolpho's horn
Pour'd on my ear the' annoying blast: at which
Rogero trembled, Bradamant grew pale,
And into air dissolv'd the' enchanted dome.
Now starting from this wilderness of dreams,
I wake from fancied into real woe.

Pain empties all her vials on my head,
And steeps me o'er and o'er. The' envenom'd
Of Hercules enwraps my burning limbs
With dragon's blood: I rave and roar like hin
Writhing in agony. Devouring fires
Eat up the marrow, frying in my bones.
O whither, whither shall I turn for aid?
Methinks a Seraph whispers in my ears,
Pouring ambrosia on them, 'Turn to God!
So peace shall be thy pillow, ease thy bed,
And night of sorrow brighten into noon.
Let the young cherub Patience, bright-ey'd f
And rosy-finger'd Prayer, combining hold
A sure dominion in thy purpos'd mind,
Unconquer'd by affliction.'—I receive
The mandate as from Heaven itself.—Expand
Thyself, my soul, and let them enter in.
Come, smiling angel, Patience, from thy sea
Whether the widow's cot, or hermit's cell,
By fasting strong, and potent from distress;
Or midnight student's taper-glimmering roof,
Unwearied with revolving tedious tomes,
O come, thou panacea of the mind!
The manna of the soul! to every taste
Grateful alike: the universal balm
To Sickness, Pain, and Misery below.
She comes! she comes! she dissipates the glo
My eyes she opens, and new scenes unfolds;
(Like Moses' bush, though burning, not consu
Scenes full of splendor, miracle, and God.
Behold, my soul, the martyr-army, who
With holy blood the violence of fire
Quench'd, and with lingering constancy fatigu
The persecuting flame; or nobly stop'd

The lion's mouth, and triumph'd in his jaws.
Hark, how the virgin white-rob'd tender train
Chant hallelujahs to the rack; as dear
And pleasing to the ear of GOD, as hymns
Of angels on the Resurrection morn,
When all the host of Heaven hosanna sing!
Yet further; lift thy eyes upon the cross,
A bleeding SAVIOUR view, a dying GOD!
Earth trembles, rend the rocks, creation groans:
The sun, asham'd, extinguishes the day:
All Nature suffers with her suffering Lord.
Amidst this war of elements, serene,
And as the sun-shine brow of patience, calm,
He dies without a groan, and smiles in death.
Shall martyrs, virgins, nay, thy SAVIOUR bleed,
To teach thee patience: and yet bleed in vain?
Forbid it, reason; and forbid it, Heav'n!
No; suffer: and, in suffering, rejoice.
Patience endureth all, and hopeth all.
  Hope is her daughter then. Let hope distil
Her cordial spirit, as Hybla honey sweet,
And healing as the drops of Gilead balm.
Cease to repine, as those who have no hope;
Nor let Despair approach thy darkest hour.
Despair! that triple death! the' imperial plague!
The' exterminating angel of the' accurst,
And sole disease of which the damn'd are sick,
Kindling a fever hotter than their hell—
O pluck me from Despair, white-handed Hope
O interpose thy spear and silver shield
Betwixt my bosom and the fiend! detrude
This impious monster to primeval hell;
To its own dark domain: but light my soul,
Imp'd with thy glittering wings, to scenes of joy.

To health and life, for health and life are thine
And fire imagination with the skies.
  But whence this confidence of hope? In T
And in thy blood, my JESUS! (bow, O earth!
Heav'n bends beneath the Name, and all its so
The hierarchy! drop low the prostrate knee,
And sink, in humble wise, upon the stars.)
Yes, on thy blood and name my hope depends
My hope! nay, worlds on worlds depend on T
Live in thy death, from thy sepulchre rise.
Thy influential vigour reinspires
This feeble frame; dispels the shade of death;
And bids me throw myself on GOD in prayer.
  A christian soul is God's beloved house;
And prayer the incense which perfumes the s
Let armies then of supplications rise,
Besiege the golden gates of Heaven, and force
With holy violence, a blessing down
In living streams. If Hezekiah's pray'r
The sun arrested in his prone career,
And bade the shadow ten degrees return
On Ahaz' dial, whirling back the day:
Pour out thyself, my soul! with fervent zeal,
With overflowing ardour, and with faith
Unwavering. To assist me, and to swell
My fainting spirits to sublime desires,
Would Taylor* from his starry throne descend,
How fear would brighten! by his sacred aid,
To live were happiness, and gain to die.—
No: let him still adorn his starry throne,
Well-merited by labours so divine:
For, lo! the man of God, and friend of man,

* Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

Theron, the purest breast, and warmest heart,
Flies on the wings of charity and love
To join me in the saving task, and raise
My weaker powers with his abundant zeal;
Pure, sweet, and glowing as the incens'd fires
Of Solomon, thy golden altar, fann'd
By wings of cherubims into a flame;
Till on the skies the aromatic gale
In pyramids of fragrance softly stole,
A grateful offering to the throne of grace.
  Still, though I feel these succours from the skies,
In operation mighty! still remain
Inferior aids behind: terrestrial stores
Medicinal: the instruments of God.
For God created the physician! God
Himself on earth, our great physician! spread
O'er sick and weak, shadowing, his healing wings:
Each miracle a cure!—Before disease,
Offspring of sin, infested human kind,
In Paradise, the vegetable seeds
Sprung from their Maker's hand, invigorate-strong
With med'cine. He foresaw our future ills;
Foreseeing, he provided ample cure;
Fossils, and simples: Solomon, thy theme,
Nature's historian; wisest of the wise!
Though Paradise be lost, the tree of Life
In med'cine blooms; then pluck its healing fruits,
And with thanksgiving eat; and, eating, live.
  Ev'n pagan Wisdom bade her sons adore,
As one, the god of physic and the day,
Fountain of vegetation and of life,
Apollo, ever blooming, ever young,
And from his art immortal! Thus, of yore,
The prime of human race from Heaven deduc'd
The *bright original* of Physic's pow'r:

And, nor unjustly, deem'd that he who sav'd
Millions from death, himself should never die.
An instrument of various pipes and tubes,
Veins, arteries, and sinews, organiz'd,
Man, when in healthy tune, harmonious wakes
The breath of melody, in vocal praise,
Delighting earth and Heaven! discordant, oft,
As accident, or time, or fate prevail,
This human organ scarce the bellows heaves
Of vital respiration; or in pain
With pauses sad: what art divine shall tune
To order and refit this shatter'd frame?
What fingers touch into a voice again?
Or music reinspire? Who, but the race
Of Pæan? who but physic's saving sons?
A Ratcliff, Frewin, Metcalf, or a Frend?—
But something yet, beyond the kindly skill
Of Pæan's sons, disease, like mine, demands;
Nepenthe to the soul, as well as life.
O for a mother's watchful tenderness,
And father's venerable care!—But they,
In life immortal, gather endless joys,
Reward of charity, of innocence,
Of pleasing manners and a life unblam'd!
The tears of poverty and friendship oft
Their modest tombs bedew, where Eden's floo
(Ituna 'clep'd by bards of old renown,
Purpled with Saxon and with British blood)
Laves the sweet vale, that first my prattling Mu
Provok'd to numbers, broken as the ruins
Of Roman towers which deck its lofty banks,
And shine more beauteous by decay.—But har
What music glads my ear? 'Tis Theron's voice
Theron, a father, mother; both, a friend!—
Pain flies before his animating touch:

The gentle pressure of his cordial hand,
A burning mountain from my bosom heaves!
What wonders, sacred friendship, flow from thee!
One period from a friend enlivens more
Than all Hippocrates' and Galen's tomes,
Than all the med'cines they unfold. I feel
Myself renew'd! not only health, but youth,
Rolls the brisk tide, and sparkles at my heart.
As the live atoms of Campanian wines
Dance in the virgin crystal, and o'erlook
With glorifying foam the nectar'd brim;
Smiling, and lending smiles to social wit,
The jocund hearth, and hospitable board.
  Friendship is a religion, from the first
The second-best: it points, like that, to Heav'n,
And almost antedates, on earth, its bliss.
But vice and folly never friendship knew;
Whilst wisdom grows by friendship still more wise.
Her fetters, are a strong defence; her chains,
A robe of glory; Ophir gold, her bands;
And he who wears them, wears a crown of joy.
  Friendship's the steel, which, struck, emits the sparks
Of candour, peace, benevolence, and zeal;
Spreading their glowing seeds—A holy fire
Where honour beams on honour, truth on truth;
Bright as the eyes of angels and as pure.
An altar, whence two gentle-loving hearts
Mount to the skies in one conspiring blaze
And spotless union. 'Tis the nectar stream
Which feeds and elevates seraphic love—
Health is disease, life death, without a friend.

NOTES AND ALLUSIONS

TO BOOK III.

PAGE 324. *As once thy breathing harvest, Cadmus, sprung, &c.*—Cadmus is reported by the poets to have slain a monstrous serpent in Bœotia, at the command of Minerva; and sowed its teeth in a field, which produced an host of armed soldiers; who, fighting, slew one other. See Ovid. Met. l. iii. Suidas, Pausanias, &c. 'Tis said, that he sowed serpents' teeth, and that soldiers in armour sprung up from them; because, as Bochart observes, in the Phœnician language, to express men armed with brazen darts and spears of brass, they made use of words, which might be translated 'armed with the teeth of a serpent.'

P. 325. *Yet Fancy's mimic works, &c.*—The following lines upon delirious dreams may appear very extravagant to a reader, who never experienced the disorders which sickness causes in the brain; but the author thinks that he has rather softened than exaggerated the real description, as he found them operate on his own imagination at that time.

P. 325. *From Heliconian cliffs devolv'd,* &c.—Sir G. Wheeler, in his voyages, has given a very beautiful description of an hermitage on the borders of Mount Helicon, belonging to the convent

of Saint Luke the hermit, (not the evangelist) called Stiriotes, from his dwelling in those deserts. *See Wheeler's Journey into Greece, fol. B.* iv. *p.* 325.

P. 326. *Warbled to Doric reeds, &c.*—Those different instruments are designed to express the several parts of poetry, to which they were adapted, viz. Pastoral, Ode, Heroic, &c.

P. 327. *Hark, how the anvils, &c.*—See Hom. Ilias, B. xviii. Virg. Æn. B. viii.

P. 327. —— *Astolpho's horn.*—

> A horn in which if he do once but blow,
> The noise thereof shall trouble men so sore,
> That all both stout and faint shall fly therefro,
> So strange a noise was never heard before.
>
> *Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, translated by Sir John Harington, B.* xv. *Stanz.* 10.

With this horn Astolpho affrighted the Amazons. See Book xx. St. 60, &c. And even Rogero, Bradamant, &c. in dissolving the enchanted palace, B. xxii. St. 18, &c. drives away the harpies from Senapo, B. xxxiii. St. 114, &c.

P. 332. —— *Eden's flood.*—

> ——————Eden, though but small,
> Yet often stain'd with blood of many a band
> Of Scots and English both, that tined on his strand.
>
> *Spenser's Fairy Queen, Book* iv. *Canto* 11.

P. 333. *But vice and folly never friendship knew.*—It was an observation of Socrates, that wicked men cahnot be friends either amongst themselves or with good men. *Xenoph. Memorab.* l. ii.

THE

RECOVERY.

Thou hast delivered my soul from death, and my feet
ing, that I may walk before God in the Light of the
l

ARGUMENT.

Reflections. Sickness at the worst. Hopes of Recove
Heaven alone. Prospect of futurity at this junctur
dian Angel's Hymn to Mercy. Description of her.
Hygeia to the well of life: both described. Her dese
effects. Abatement of the distemper. Apostrophe
Recovery of sight; and pleasure flowing from thene
by degrees restored. Comparison between sickness a
in regard to the body and mind.

BOOK IV.

SWIFT too, thy tale is told: a sound, a nam
No more than Lucian, Butler, or Scarron.
Fantastic Humour drop'd the feeling sense,
Her empire lessening by his fall. The sha
Of frolic Rabelais, and him of Spain,
Madrid's facetious glory, join his ghost;
Triumvirate of laughter!—Mirth is mad;
The loudest languishing into a sigh:
And Laughter shakes itself into decay.
'Lord! what is man?' the prophet well
We all may ask, 'Lord! what is mortal ma

So changeable his being, with himself
Dissimilar; the rainbow of an hour!
A change of colours, transient through his life,
Brightens or languishes;—then fades to air.
Ev'n ere an artful spider spins a line
Of metaphysic texture, man's thin thread
Of life is broken: how analogous
Their parallel of lines! slight, subtle, vain.
Man, in a little hour's contracted round
Perplexes reason: now to triumph swell'd,
To joyous exultations, to a blaze
Of ecstacy; and now depress'd, again,
And drooping into scenes of death and woe.
That sudden flow of spirits, bright and strong,
Which play'd in sprightly sallies round my heart;
Was it a gleam, forewarning me from Heav'n,
Of quick-approaching fate! As tapers mount
Expiring into wide-diffusive flame,
Give one broad glare, into the socket sink,
And sinking disappear.—It must be so!
The soul, prophetic of its voyage, descried
The blissful shore, exulting on the wing,
In a glad flutter: then, o'erwhelm'd with joy,
She warn'd her old companion of her flight,
(The feeble tenement of mouldering clay)
Who sadden'd at their parting.—Yes,—I feel
Thy leaden hand, O Death! it presses hard,
It weighs the faculties of motion down,
Inactive as the foot of a dull rock,
And drags me to thy dusty chains: the wheels
Of life are fasten'd to the grave, nor whirl,
Longer, the fiery chariot on. The war,
The struggle for eternity begins.
Eternity! illimitable, vast,

Incomprehensible! for Heaven and hell,
Within her universal womb, profound,
Are center'd.—Sleep or death are on my he
Swims heavily my brain :—My senses reel.
What scenes disclose themselves! what fi
What rivers of delight! what golden bower
Sweetly oppress'd with beatific views,
I hear angelic instruments, I see
Primeval ardours, and essential forms;
The sons of Light, but of created Light,
All energy, the diligence of God!
Might I but join them! lend your glittering
Waft me, O quickly waft me to yon crown,
Bright with the flaming roses of the zone
Sidereal: gracious, they, beckoning, smile,
They smile me to the skies! Hope leads the
Mounting I spring to seize!—What fury sha
Her fiery sword, and intercepts the stars?
Ha! Amartia? Conscience, conscience sends
Her grisly form, to blast me at my end.
Behold! she points to burning rocks, to wav
Sulphureous, molten lead, and boiling gulfs,
Tempestuous with everlasting fire.—
'Tis horrible!—O save me from myself!—
O save me, Jesu!—Ha! a burst of light
Blends with the empyréum's azure tide,
While Faith, triumphant, swells the trump o
And shouting, 'Where's thy victory, O Grav
And where, O Death, thy sting?' I see her s
Her saving banner o'er my soul (the Cross!)
And call it to its peers. Thick crowds of d
Immaculate, involve me in their streams,
And bathe my spirit, whiten'd for the sky.
While on this isthmus of my fate I lie,

ng into eternity's wide sea,
leaning on this habitable globe,
verge of either world! dubious of life,
ous, alike, of death; to Mercy thus,
rited with supplicating zeal,
uardian-angel rais'd his potent prayer:
angels minister to man, intent
fices of gentleness and love).
lear, Mercy! sweetest daughter of the skies,
i loveliest image of thy Father's face,
i blessed fount, whence grace and goodness flow,
icious, hear! extend thy helping arm,
pitying readiness, with willing aid,
t thy servant from the vale of death,
groveling in the dust, into the fields
omfort, and the pastures green of health.
', Mercy, sweetest daughter of the skies!
er thy servant to the poor his soul
v out, and taught the fatherless to sing,
er by pity warm'd, and not by pride,
loth'd the naked, and the hungry fed;
er distress and misery, forlorn,
iv'd his cheek, and stole his untaught tear,
umble drop of thy celestial dew!
', Mercy, sweetest daughter of the skies.
prung from the bosom of eternal bliss,
goodness reaches farther than the grave;
near the gates of hell extends thy sway,
ipotent! All, save the cursed crew
nal, and the black rebellious host
ucifer, within thy sweet domain
l on ambrosia, and may hope the stars.
', Mercy, sweetest daughter of the skies!
hee, the great Physician from the bed

Of darkness call'd the sick, the blind, the lan
He burst the grave's relentless bars by thee,
And spoke the dead to life and bloom again.
His miracles, thy work; their glory, thine:
Then, O thou dearest Attribute of God!
Thy saving health to this thy servant lend!
Hear, Mercy, sweetest daughter of the skies!
Inclin'd upon a dewy-skirted cloud,
Purpled with light, and dropping fatness dow
Plenty and bliss on man, with looks as mild
As evening suns (when flowery-footed May
Leads on the jocund Hours, when Love hims
Flutters in green) effusing heartfelt joy
Abundant, Mercy shone with sober grace,
And majesty at once with sweetness mix'd
Ineffable. A rainbow o'er her head,
The covenant of God, betokening peace
'Twixt Heaven and earth, its florid arch displ
High-bended by the' Almighty's glorious ha
The languish of the dove upon her eyes
In placid radiance melted, from the throne
Of grace infus'd, and fed with light; her smil
Expansive cheer'd the undetermin'd tracks
Of all creation, from the' ethereal cope,
August with moving fires, down to the shades
Infernal, and the reign of darkness drear.
Ev'n men refine to angels from her gaze,
Gracious, invigorating, full of Heav'n!
This daughter of the Lamb, to fervent pray
And intercession, opes her ready ear,
Compassionate; and to Hygeia thus:—
'Hygeia, hie thee to the well of life;
There dip thy fingers; touch his head and br
Three drops into his mouth infuse, unseen,

Save by the eye of Faith: he yonder lies—
Descend, and take the evening's western wing.'
She said. Hygeia bow'd; and bowing, fill'd
The circumambient air with odorous streams,
Pure essence of ambrosia! not the breath
Of Lebanon, from cedar alleys blown,
Of Lebanon, with aromatic gales
Luxuriant, spikenard, aloes, myrrh, and balm,
Nor the wise Eastern monarch's garden, vied
In fragrance, when his fair Circassian spouse,
Enamour'd, call'd upon the south to fan
Its beds of spices, and her bosom cool,
Panting with languishment and love-sick fires.
Forth from the' eternal throne the well of Life,
Pouring its crystal, laves the streets of God,
(Where sickness never comes, nor Age, nor Pain)
Fast trickling o'er the pebble gems. Beneath
Unfading amaranth and asphodel,
A mirror spreads its many-colour'd round,
Mosaic work, inlaid by hands divine
In glistering rows, illuminating each,
Each shading: beryl, topaz, chalcedon,
Emerald, and amethyst. Whatever hues
The light reflects, celestial quarries yield,
Or melt into the vernant-showery bow,
Profusive, vary here in mingling beams.
Collected thus the waters, dimpling, end
Their soft progressive lapse. The Cherubs hence
Immortal vigour quaff and bliss unblam'd.
Nor only flow for you, ye sons of Light,
The streams of comfort and of life, but flow
To heal the nations. Wonderful to tell,
The aged they renew, the dead revive,
And more, the festers of the wounded oul,

Corrupted, black, to pristine white relume
And saint-like innocence. The mystic Dove
Broods, purifying o'er them, with his wings.
The angel, who Bethesda's troubled pool
Stirr'd, first his pinions with these vital drops
Sprinkled; then pour'd himself into the flood,
Instilling health and nutriment divine,
Its waves to quicken, and exalt its powers.
  Here lights Hygeia, ardent to fulfil
Mercy's behest. The bloom of Paradise [Spring
Liv'd on her youthful cheek, and glow'd th
The deep carnations in the Eastern skies,
When ruddy Morning walks along the hills,
Illustriously red, in purple dews,
Are languid to her blushes; for she blush'd
As through the opening file of winged flames,
Bounding, she lighted, and her sapphire eyes
With modest lustre bright, improving Heav'n,
Cast, sweetly, round, and bow'd to her compeers,
An angel amid angels. Light she sprung
Along the' empyreal road: her locks distill'd
Salubrious spirit on the stars. Full soon
She pass'd the gate of pearl, and down the sky,
Precipitant, upon the evening wing
Cleaves the live ether, and with healthy balm
Impregnates, and fecundity of sweets.
  Conscious of her approach, the wanton birds,
Instinctive, carol forth, in livelier lays,
And merrier melody, their grateful hymn,
Brisk fluttering to the breeze. Eftsoons the hill
Beneath the gambols of the lamb and kid,
Of petulant delight, the circling maze
(Brush'd off its dews) betray. All Nature smiles
With double day delighted. Chief, on man

The goddess ray'd herself: he, wondering, feels
His heart in driving tumults, vigorous, leap,
And gushing ecstacy: bursts out his tongue
In loud, and unpremeditated song,
Obedient to the music in his veins.
Thus, when at first, the instantaneous light
Sprung from the voice of God, and, vivid, threw
Its golden mantle round the rising ball,
The cumbrous mass, shot through with vital warmth
And plastic energy, to motion roll'd
The drowsy elements, and active rule:
Sudden the Morning Stars, together, sang,
And shouted all the sons of God for joy.
  Enters Hygeia, and her task performs,
With healing fingers touch'd my breast and head;
Three drops into my mouth infus'd, unseen,
Save by the eye of Faith: then reascends.
  As snow in Salmon, at the tepid touch
Of southern gales, by soft degrees, dissolves
Trickling, yet slow, away; and loosen'd frosts
The genial impress feel of vernal suns,
Relenting to the ray; my torpid limbs
The healing virtue of Hygeia's hand
And salutary influence perceive,
Instant to wander through the whole. My heart
Begins to melt, o'errunning into joy,
Late froze with agony. Kind tumults seize
My spirits, conscious of returning health,
And dire disease abating from the cells
And mazy haunts of life. The judging Leech
Approves the symptoms, and my hope allows.
  The hostile humours cease to bubble o'er
Their big-distended channels; quiet now
And sinking into peace. The organs heave

Kindlier with life: and Nature's fabric, near
To dissolution shatter'd, and its mould
To dust dissolv'd, though not its pristine strength
(The lusty vigour of its healthy prime)
Yet gentle force recovers; to maintain,
Against the tyrant Death's battering assaults,
The fort of Life.—But darkness, present still,
And absent sweet repose, best medicine, sleep,
Forbid my heart the full carouse of joy.

'Soft power of slumbers, dewy-feather'd Sleep,
Kind nurse of Nature! whither art thou fled,
A stranger to my senses, wearied out
With pain, and aching for thy presence? Come,
O come! embrace me in thy liquid arms;
Exert thy drowsy virtue, wrap my limbs
In downy indolence, and bathe in balm,
Fast flowing from the' abundance of thy horn,
With nourishment replete, and richer stor'd
Than Amalthea's; who, (so poets feign)
With honey and with milk supplied a god,
And fed the thunderer. Indulgent quit
Thy couch of poppies! steal thyself on me,
(In rosy mists suffus'd and clouds of gold)
On me, thou mildest cordial of the world!

The shield his pillow, in the tented field,
By thee, the soldier, bred in iron war,
Forgets the mimic thunders of the day,
Nor envies luxury her bed of down.
Rock'd by the blast, and cabin'd in the storm,
The sailor hugs thee to the doddering mast,
Of shipwreck negligent, while thou art kind.
The captive's freedom, thou! the labourer's hire;
The beggar's store; the miser's better gold;
The health of Sickness; and the youth of Age!

At thy approach the wrinkled front of Care
Subsides into the smooth expanse of smiles.
And, stranger far! the monarch, crown'd by thee,
Beneath his weight of glory gains repose.
  What guilt is mine, that I alone am wake,
Ev'n though my eyes are seal'd, am wake alone?
Ah! seal'd, but not by thee! the world is dumb;
Exhal'd by air, an awful silence rules,
Still as thy brother's reign, or foot of time;
Ev'n nightingales are mute, and lovers rest,
Steep'd in thy influence, and cease to sigh,
Or only sigh in slumbers. Fifteen nights
The moon has walk'd in glory o'er the sky;
As oft the sun has shone her from the sphere,
Since, gentle Sleep, I felt thy cordial dews.
Then listen to my moaning; nor delay
To sooth me with thy softness; to o'ershade
Thy suppliant with thy pinions: or at least,
Lightly to touch my temples with thy wand.
  So, full and frequent, may the crimson fields
With poppies blush, nor feel a Tarquin's hand.
So may the west winds sigh, the murmuring brook,
The melody of birds, Ianthe's lute,
And music of the spheres, be all the sounds
That dare intrude on thy devoted hour.
Nor Boreas bluster, nor the thunder roar,
Nor screech-owl flap his wing, nor spirit yell,
As 'neath the trembling of the moon he walks,
Within the circle of thy still domain.
He comes! he comes! the reconciling Pow'r
Of pain, vexation, care, and anguish comes!
He hovers in the lazy air:—He melts,
With honey heaviness, my senses down.— [stor'd
  —I thank thee, Sleep!—Heavens! is the day re-

To my desiring eyes? their lids, unglew'd,
Admit the long-lost light, now streaming in
Painfully clear!—O check the rapid gleam
With shading silk, till the weak visual orb,
Stronger and stronger, dares imbibe the sun,
Nor, watering, twinkles at unfolded day.
As, where, in Lapland, Night collects her reign,
Oppressive, over half the rounded year
Uninterrupted with one struggling beam;
Young Orra-Moor, in furry spoils inroll'd,
Shagged and warm, first spies the' imperfect blush
Of opening light, exulting; scarce her eyes
The lustre bear, though faint; but, widening fast,
The' unbounded tide of splendour covers, fair,
The' expanded hemisphere; and fills her sight
With gladness, while her heart, warm-leaping, burns.
Sight, all-expressive! though the feeling sense
Thrills from Ianthe's hand; at Handel's lyre
Tingles the ear; though smell from blossom'd beans
Arabian spirit gathers; and the draught,
Sparkling from Burgundy's exalted vines,
Streams nectar on the palate: yet, O Sight!
Weak their sensations, when compar'd with thee.
Without thee, nature lies unmeaning gloom.
Whatever smiles on earth, or shines in heav'n,
From star of Venus to Adonis' flow'r;
Whatever Spring can promise; Summer warm
To rich maturity; gay Autumn roll
Into the lap of plenty, or her horn;
Winter's majestic horrors;—all are thine.
All varying in order's pleasing round,
In regular confusion grateful all!
And now progressive Health, with kind repair,
My fever-weaken'd joints and languid limbs

New brace. Live vigour and auxiliard nerves
Sinew the freshen'd frame in bands of steel.
As in the trial of the furnace ore,
From baser dregs refin'd, and drossy scum,
Flames more refulgent, and admits the stamp
Of majesty to dignify the gold,
Cæsar or George! the human body, thus,
Enamel'd, not deform'd, from Sickness' rage
More manly features borrows, and a grace
Severe, yet worthier of its sovereign form.
The patriarch of Uz, son of the Morn,
Envied of Lucifer, by sores and blains
Sharply improv'd, to fairer honours rose;
Less his beginning blest than latter end.
How late a tortur'd lump of baleful pain,
The soul immerg'd in one inactive mass
Of breathing blains, each elegance of sense,
Each intellectual spark and fiery seed
Of reason, memory, judgment, taste, and wit,
Extinct and smother'd in unwieldy clay
Scarce animated: and (O blessing!) now
I seem to tread the winds; to overtake
The empty eagle in her early chase,
Or nimble trembling dove, from preyful beak,
In many a rapid, many a cautious round,
Wheeling precipitant: I leave behind,
Exulting o'er its aromatic hills,
The bounding Bether roe. The poet's mind,
(Effluence essential of heat and light!)
Not mounts a loftier wing, when Fancy leads
The glittering track, and points him to the skies,
Excursive: he empyreal air inhales,
Earth fading from his flight! triumphant soars
Amid the pomp of planetary worlds,

Ranging infinitude, beyond the stretch
Of Newton's ken, reformer of the spheres,
And, gaining on the heavens, enjoys his home
  The Winter of disease all pass'd away,
The Spring of health, in bloomy pride, calls f
Embosom'd bliss, of rosy-winged praise
The rising incense, the impassion'd glance
Of gratitude, the pant of honour, quick
With emulating zeal; the florid wish
For sacred happiness, and cordial glow
From conscious virtue felt: all the sweet train
Of vernal Solitude's refining walks,
Best gift of Heaven, and source of nameless j

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

NOTES AND ALLUSIONS

TO BOOK IV.

PAGE 338. *The sons of Light.*—Light is the first-born of all creatures; and it is commonly observed that the Angels were created at the same period of time. St. Austin thinks them meant under Fiat Lux, 'Let there be Light;' De Civitate Dei, l. xi. c. 9. This indeed is only conjectural, and we have no article of the Apostles' Creed which directs upon any considerations of Angels; because, perhaps, it exceeds the faculties of men to understand their nature, and it may not conduce much to our practical edification to know them. Yet, however, this observation may serve to illustrate that beautiful passage in the Book of Job: When 'the Morning Stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.'

P. 342. ——— *to pristine white velume.*—White has been accounted in all ages the peculiar tincture of Innocence, and white vestments worn by persons delegated for sacred offices, &c. When our Saviour was transfigured before his disciples, his raiment became shining, 'exceeding white as snow,' Mark, chap. ix. 3. When he ascended into Heaven, the Angels descended in 'white apparel,' Acts i. 10. 'And to the spouse of the Lamb was

granted that she should be arrayed in fine
clean and white, which is the righteousness
Saints,' Rev. xix. ver. 8. 14. Hence the cust
the primitive Church of clothing the person
tized in white garments.

> Inde parens sacro ducens de fonte sacerdos
> Infantes, niveo corpore, mente, habitu.
> *Paulinus, Epist.*

The Heathens paid likewise a great reg
white.

> Color albus præcipue Deo charus est.
> *Cicero de Leg. Lib*

> —— Ante aras stat veste sacerdos
> Effulgens nivea. *Silius Ital. Lib.*

> Delius hic longe candenti veste sacerdos
> Occurrit. *Valerius Flacc. Lib*

And not only the priests, but likewise thos
attended at the sacrifices, and paid their dev
to their gods:

> Cernite fulgentes ut eat sacer agnus ad aras,
> Tinctaque post olea candida turba comas.
> *Tibull. Lib.* ii. *Ele*

And Ovid:

> Linguis candida turba favet.
> *Fast. Lib.* ii.

I shall only add one passage, from Plautus

> ———— Ergo æquius vos erat
> Candidatas venire, hostiatasque ad hoc
> Fanum. *Rudens. Act.* i. *S*

P. 343.——*touch'd my b east and head,*

Three drops, &c.—Hygeia here pe
her office in the very manner she was orde
Mercy. I have, after the manner of Homer
the same expressions over again, as when s
ceived the mandate. The Father of Poetr

stantly makes his Envoys observe this practice, as a mark of decency and respect.

P. 344. *Than Amalthea's, &c.*—Amalthea, the daughter of Melissus, king of Crete, and nurse of Jupiter, who fed him with goats' milk and honey. But this story is differently related. See Strabo, l. x. Diodor. Sicul. l. iv. c. 5. and Ovid. Fast. l. v. It is very remarkable that the translation of the Septuagint uses the expression Amalthea's horn, for the name of Job's third daughter, Keren-happuc, (so called from her beauty) alluding to a Grecian fable invented long after; Job, ch. the last, v. 14. The same translation likewise mentions Arachne, in Psalm xc. verse 9, which image is left out in all our late versions. A Christian poet, therefore, may surely be excused for using the word Ambrosia, &c. or drawing metaphors or comparisons from the pagan mythology, in a serious composition; which is the practice of Milton, and some of the best poets. The fault only is, when the poet weaves the Heathen fables with the Jewish and Christian truths. As when Sannazarius introduces the Furies, Cerberus, &c. into his poem (which is otherwise a very fine one) De Partu Virginis. And likewise when Camoëns blends the adventures of Bacchus with the miracles of Christ, &c. in his Lusiad. But this by the by.

THE

THANKSGIVING.

The grave cannot praise Thee; death cannot celebrate
The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this da
ISA

ARGUMENT.

THE effects which the restoration of health ought to have
solitudes of Spring. Rural prospect. Excursion to the
at Tournay. Reflections on the abuses of modern
Hymn to the ever-blessed and glorious TRINITY:
GOD the FATHER, as Creator and Preserver: 2dly, to
the SON, as Mediator and Redeemer: 3dly, to GOD the
GHOST, as Sanctifier and Comforter. Conclusion.

BOOK V.

Come Contemplation! therefore from thy hau
From Spenser's tomb, (with reverent steps an
Oft visited by me; certès by all, [ret
Touch'd by the Muse:) from Richmond's
Where Nature's Bard* the Seasons on his pa
Stole from the Year's rich hand; or Welwyn g
Where Young, the friend of virtue and of ma

* Thomson.

Sows with poetic stars the nightly song,
To Phœbus dear as his own day! and drowns
The nightingale's complaint in sadder strains
And sweeter elegance of woe, O come!
Now evening mildly still, and softer suns
(While every breeze is flowing balm) invite
To taste the fragrant spirit of the spring
Salubrious; from mead or hawthorn hedge
Aromatiz'd, and pregnant with delight
No less than health. And what a prospect round
Swells greenly grateful on the cherish'd eye!
An universal blush! a waste of sweets!
How live the flowers, and, as the zephyrs blow,
Wave a soft lustre on their parent sun,
And thank him with their odours for his beams;
Mild image of himself! reflected fair,
By faintness fair, and amiably mild!
  Hark! how the airy echoes talk along
With undulating answer, soft or loud,
The mocking semblance of the imag'd voice,
Babbling itinerant from wood to hill,
From hill to dale, and wake their sisters round,
To multiply delight upon the ear.
  As float the clouds, romantic fancy pours
The magazines of Proteus forth, and builds
Huge castles in the air; while vessels sail
Spacious, along the fluid element;
And dragons burn in gold, with azure stains
Speckled: ten thousand inconsistent shapes
Shift on the eye, and through the welkin roll.
  Here tufted hills; there shining villas rise,
Circling; and temples, solemn, fill the mind
With beauty, splendour, and religious awe!

Peace o'er the plains expands her snowy win
Dove-eyed; and buxom plenty laughs around
Far different objects mortify the eye
Along thy borders, Scheld: (with William's t
Ennobled, tears from brave humanity
And royal pity drawn! nor of his blood
Less prodigal!) Instead of herbag'd plains,
Of fields with golden plenty waving wide,
Of lowing valleys, and of fleecy hills:
What magazines of death! what flaming swor
Destruction brandish; what a burnish'd glare
Of horror wanders round; what carnage vile
Of dubitable limbs; what groaning piles
Of dying warriors on the' ensanguin'd earth
(Ev'n sons of Britain, chiefs of high renown)
Grovelling in dust, and with unmartial fires
Sheer blasted! O 'tis pitiful to sight!
It smites the honest brain and heart! The clo
Belch'd from the brazen throat of war, would
Industrious, the ruin which it spreads,
As if asham'd of massacre—But hark!—
What dire explosion tears the' embowel'd sk
And rumbles from the' infernal caves? The r
Of Etna's troubled caverns, when she heaves
Trinacria from her marble pillars, fix'd
On the foundations of the solid earth,
And Thetis' bellows from her distant dens,
O'erwhelm the ear!—A mine with deadly sto
Infuriate, burst; and a whole squadron'd host
Whirl'd through the riven air. A human sho
With smouldry smoke enroll'd and wrapt in f
To cover earth with desolation drear!—
Curst be the man, the monk, the son of hel

The triple Moloch! whose mechanic brain,
Maliciously inventive, from its forge,
Of cruel steel, the sulphur seeds of wrath
Flash'd on the world, and taught us how to kill;
To hurl the blazing ruin, to disgorge
From smoking brass the ragged instruments
Of fate, in thunder, on the mangled files
Of gallant foes:—the cowardice of hell!
And, what the barbarous nations never knew,
(Though nourish'd by the tigers, and their tongues
Red with the gore of lions) to involve
The holy temples, the religious fanes,
To hallelujahs sacred and to peace,
With dreadless fires. Shuddering the angels weep
At man's impiety, and seek the skies:
They weep! while man, courageous in his guilt,
Smiles at the infant writhing on his spear;
The hoary head pollutes the flinty streets
With scanty blood; and virgins pray in vain.
Blush, blush! or own Deucalion for thy sire.
Yet should Rebellion, bursting from the caves
Of Erebus, uprear her hydra form,
To poison Liberty, thy light divine;
If she, audacious, stalk in open day,
And hiss against the throne by Heaven's own hand
Establish'd, and religion heaven-reform'd,
Britannia! rescue earth from such a bane:
Exert thy ancient spirit; urge thyself
Into the bowels of the glowing war,
Sweep her from day to multiply the fiends, [Hosts,
And scare the damn'd!—and Thou! the God of
Supreme! the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings!
Thy people, thy anointed, with thy shield

Cover and shade; unbare thy righteous arm,
And save us in the hollow of thy hand!
Michaël send, as erst against the host
Of Lucifer, and let his sword be drunk
With rebel blood. The battle is thy own;
When virtue, liberty, religion call:
Thine is the victory: the glory thine!
Turn, Contemplation, from this savage scen
Of violence and waste: my swimming eyes
Have lost the beauties of the vernal view!
Sweet are the beauties of the vernal view!
And yet devotion wafts to nobler themes,
And lifts the soul to Heaven! For who, untou
With mental adoration, feeling laud,
Beholds this living-vegetable whole,
This universal witness of a God!
Though silent, yet convincing, uncontrol'd,
Which meets the sense, and triumphs in the s
Let me, (by Isaac's wise example fir'd,
When meditation led him through the fields)
Sweetly in pious musings lost, adore
My God! for meditation is too poor,
Below the sacrifice of christian hearts:
Plato could meditate; a Christian, more:
Christians, from meditation, soar to pray'r.
Methinks I hear, reprov'd by modern wit,
Or rather pagan: 'Though ideal sounds
Soft wafted on the zephyr's fancied wing,
Steal tuneful soothings on the easy ear,
New from Ilissus' gilded mists exhal'd;
Though gently o'er the academic groves,
The magic echoes of unbodied thoughts
Roll their light billows through the' unwounded

In mildest undulations! yet a priest,*
Tasteless and peevish, with his jargon shrill,
Scorns Academus; though its flowers bestow
On Hybla nectar, purer than her own,
From Plato's honey-dropping tongue distill'd
In copious streams, devolving o'er the sense
Its sweet regalement!' Philodemus, yes:
(Though learn'd Lycæum's cloisters lead the mind
Attentive on, as far as Nature leads:
And Plato, for a heathen, nobler dreams
Than dream some modern poets:) Yes, a priest,
A priest dares tell you, Salem's hallow'd walks,
And that illumin'd mountain, where a God,
The God of my Salvation, and I hope
Of thine, unutterable beauty beam'd,
(Though shaded from excess of Deity,
Too fierce for mortal aching eyes to prove
The rush of glory) me, desirous, draw
From Athen's owls, to Jordan's mystic dove.
Thou sing of Nature, and the moral charms
Gild with thy painted Muse: my fingers lift
The lyre to God! Jehova! Eloim!
Truth is my leader; only fancy, thine:
(Sweet Farinelli of enervate song!)
I quit the myrtle, for a starry crown.
And know, if Sickness shed her bluish plagues
From fog, or fen, or town-infected damps,
(And, sure I'd pity thee) among thy veins:
Then, then no platonist! thy inmost soul
Will thank me for this preaching; nor disdain
To breathe itself in prayer, as low as mine;
From God begin, with God conclude the song;
Thus glorifying with a Christian zeal.

* The very expressions of one of our disciples of Socrates.

FATHER of Heaven and Earth! Coeval SON!
And co-existing SPIRIT! Trinal-One!
Mysterious Deity; invisible;
Indefinite, and omnipresent GOD,
Inhabiting eternity! Shall dust,
Shall ashes, dare presume to sing of Thee?
O for a David's heart, and tongue of fire
To rival angels in my praise and zeal!
Yet love immense, and gratitude, with awe
Religious mix'd, shall elevate the hymn,
My heart enkindle, and inspire my tongue.
FATHER-CREATOR! who beholds Thy works,
But catches inspiration! Thou the Earth
On nothing hung, and balanc'd in the void
With a magnetic force, and central poise.
Ocean of brightness Thou! Thy grand behest
Flung on thy orb, the Sun, a sparkling drop,
To light the Stars, and feed their silver urns
With unexhausted flame; to bid them shine
Eternal in their courses, o'er the blue
Which mantles night, and woo us to repose
With roseid radiance. They, harmonious roll,
In majesty of motion, solemn, loud,
The universal hallelujah: sphere,
In lucid order, quiring sweet to sphere,
Deep-felt and loftier than a Seraph's song
The symphony of well-according worlds!
But man, thy beam, thy breath, thy image, shines
The crown, the glory, and the lord of all;
Of all below the stars! a plant, from Heav'n
Traduc'd, to spread the riches of its bloom
O'er Earth, and water'd with ethereal dews;
Incorruptible aliment! The birds
Warble among his boughs; the cattle, safe,

Pasture within his shade; and Earth, beneath
The' imperial umbrage of his branches, smiles.
The smiling Earth, the spangled spheres, and,
Their great CREATOR praise! but praise how long,
Unless by thy Almighty Arm upheld,
Preserver infinite? By Thee unless
Upheld, the earth would from her basis reel:
The spheres forego their courses, (off their orbs
The silver softness melted into shade)
Obscurely dissonant; and mortal man
(Void of thy fostering fires) his stately form
To dust be moulder'd: Chaos would resume
Her ancient anarchy; Confusion rule,
And Darkness swallow all. In Thee we live,
In Thee we move: our being's in Thy chain,
Link'd to eternity, fasten on Thee,
The pillar of our souls! For me, (how late
A neighbour of the worm!) when I forget
The wonders of thy goodness ray'd on me,
And cease to celebrate, with matin harp
Or vesper song, thy plentitude of love,
And healing mercy; may the nightly Pow'r,
Which whispers on my slumbers, cease to breathe
Her modulating impulse through my soul;
Untun'd, unhallow'd! Discord, string my lyre,
Idly, my finger, press the fretted gold,
Rebellious to the dictates of my hand,
When indolent, to swell the notes for Thee,
FATHER of Heaven and earth!—Coeval SON!
(His Word, His Essence, His Effulgence pure!)
Not less thy FILIAL likeness I adore,
Nor from thy Father's glory aught disjoin,
Redeemer! Mediator! from the birth
Of uncreated Time, thy Father's wrath

(Sprung from omniscience!) to appease, for man,
Upright as yet, to mediate, Mercy wak'd
Unbounded love in Thee; unbounded love
Contracted to the measure of a span
Immensity of GODHEAD, and thy crown
Reft from thy faded brow. Listen, O earth!
And wonder, O ye Heavens! shall He, whose fe
Are cloth'd with stars, (the glory of his head
For who can tell?) whose looks divine illume
The dazzled eyes of cherubs, and the youth
Of saints with everlasting bloom renew:
Shall He, whose vital smiles with splendour fill
The circuits of creation, and sustain
The' abodes of all existence, from the depths
Of hell beneath, above Heaven's highest orb,
With life, and health, and joy! shall He, to GOD
Dear as his eye and heart, engraven there
Deep from eternity; alone belov'd,
Alone begotten! say, shall He become
A man of grief—for man? nay more, his foe,
Rebellious next the fiends?—Astonishment
Had chain'd my tongue to silence, if the pow'rs
Of tenderest pity and of warmest love
Provok'd not pensive measures, sadder strains
Of elegiac sorrow, with the theme
Mournfully varying. Take, my soul redeem'd!
O take the moaning dove's dew-dropping wing,
Fly, fly to Solyma! and melt thy woe
To Cedron's murmurs. Thence, extend thy flig
To Golgotha's accursed tree. Behold!
Clouds roll'd on clouds of wrath (the blackest wra
Of an offended GOD!) His beauties shade;
But shade not long: it soon in drops dissolves,
Sweet to the soul as manna to the taste,

As pride of summer-flower to sight or smell!
Behind this shadowing cloud, this mystic gloom,
The Sharon-rose dy'd in the blood of Heav'n,
The lily of the valley, white from stain,
Bows the fair head, in loveliness declines,
And, sweetly languishing, it droops and dies.
But darkness veils the Sun: a curtain draw
Before the Passion; beyond wonder great,
Great beyond Silence!—(Awe-struck, pause
And heavy as the burden of our Sins! [awhile—)
"'Tis finish'd!"—Change the lyre, the numbers
Let holy anthem-airs inspire the hymn. [change;
Glory in Heaven! Redemption to Mankind,
And Peace on Earth! dominion! blessing! praise!
Thanksgiving! power! salvation to our God!
Salvation to our God, and to the Lamb!
And, co-existing Spirit! Thou, whose breath
My voice informs, shall it be mute to Thee,
Eternal Paraclete? in order, last,
Equal in glory to Omnipotence
The First, as to the second; and from Both
Proceeding; (O inexplicable Name!)
Mystical link of the unnumber'd Three!
To learning, night; to faith, the noon-tide day.
Soul of the Universe! thy wisdom, first,
The rage compos'd of warring elements,*
(The subject of a nobler future song)
Yon all-surrounding Heavens with crystal orbs
Garnish'd, and living gems, in goodly ranks
And disciplin'd array; dividing Night
From Day, their ordinances 'stablish'd sure.
Moving the Waters saw Thee o'er their face,

* The Elements. A Poem: in Four Books.

O God, the Waters saw Thee, and afraid,
Into their channels shrunk, (capacious bed
Of liquid element!) and own'd their bounds
Impassible, as that eternal gulf [
'Twixt bliss and woe.—The Prince of Pea
Largely imbib'd, when, dove-like, o'er his h
Fast by the banks of Jordan's sacred stream
Thy mantling wings diffus'd their heavenly
And Abba glorified his Only Son,
Well pleas'd.—From thy Tongues of cloven
Kindled, the nations burn'd in flaming zeal
And unextinguish'd charity, dispers'd
And glowing as the summer blaze at noon.
The rushing winds, on all their wings conve
Thy doctrine, strong to shake the guilty sou
As, erst, the dome, low-stooping to its base,
Before thy mighty presence learn'd to bend
Thou, from the morning womb, upon our so
Barren and dry, thy sanctifying dews,
Abroad, in silent softness sheds: the dews
Of Love unspotted, uncorrupted Joy;
Obedient Goodness, Temperance subdu'd;
Unshaken Faith, and Meekness without guil
Hence flow the odours out, our prayers perf
Like incense, rising fragrant on the Throne,
From golden vials pour'd, by Elder hands!
Extinct thy influential radiance, Sin,
Incumbent on the soul, as black as hell,
Holds godless anarchy: by Thee refin'd,
Incens'd, sublim'd, and sanctified, the soul
Invites the Holiest (O abyss of love!)
To choose a Temple, purer than the sun,
Incorruptible, form'd not by hands,
Where best He loves to dwell.—Thou all m

Most holy Comforter! in Sickness smooth'd,
And violet-buds, and roses, without thorn, [vale
Showered round the couch. From darkness and the
Of shadowy Death, to pastures fair, and streams
Of comfort, thy refreshing right hand led
My wearied soul, and bath'd in Health and Joy!
To light restor'd, and the sweet breath of Heav'n,
Beneath thy olive-boughs, in plenteous flow,
The golden oil effusing on my head
Of gladness, let me ever sit and sing,
Thy numerous Godhead sparkling in my soul,
Thyself instilling praises, by thy ear
Not unapprov'd! For wisdom's steady ray
The' enlightening gift of tongues, the sacred fires
Of poësy are thine; United Three!
FATHER of Heaven and Earth! Coeval SON!
And co-existing SPIRIT! Trinal-One!

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

NOTES AND ALLUSIONS

TO BOOK V.

PAGE 354. *Along thy borders, Scheld.*—This was written at the time of the siege of Tournay.

P. 356. *Plato could meditate.*—Far be it from me to speak with disrespect of this pagan philosopher. For my part, I could almost declare my admiration of Plato's beautiful descriptions, &c. in the words of B. Jonson on Shakspeare: 'To justify (says he) my own candour, I honour his memory (on this side idolatry) as much as any.' *See his discoveries, vol.* ii. *fol. of his Works.* P. 98.

I only here would observe how falsely, not to say impiously, some modern writers seem to take pains to recommend Plato's ideal morality, in opposition to the glorious doctrines so fully revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

P. 357. ——— *Philodemus.*—Alluding to Q. Sectanus's admirable Satires; who introduces much such another character under this name. The true author, as we are informed by Mons. Blainville, in his curious Travels, is Mons. Sergardi, one of the finest and politest gentlemen of Rome; by Philodemus, he means one Gravina, an atheistical pretender to philosophy, the Greek language, &c. He thus makes him boast of himself, as if he drew the principles of his system from Socrates.

Nos etenim (puto jam noti) docti sumus, et quos
Socratica cœpi tractando molliter arte
Sordibus emergunt vulgi, totaque probantur
Urbe. *See Q. Sertani Satyr. 4to. vol. i. Sat. 1. lib. i. v. 108, &c.*

P. 361. *Soul of the Universe.*—The heathens frequently give the appellation of Soul or Spirit to God.

Thus Virgil:

Cœlum et terram campasque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
Spiritus intus alit.

That he means God by Spirit, appears from another place,

——————— Deum ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris cœlumque profundum.

And Zeno's opinion is very remarkable;

Θεος εστι πνευμα δικον δι' ολου του κοσμου.

See Lactantius, B. vii. c. 3. and Diogenes Laertius in the Life of Zeno.

P. 361. *Moving the Waters save thee o'er their face, &c.*—Cicero tells us that it was Thales's opinion that God was the Spirit which created all things from the water. 'Thales aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem esse mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret.' *De Nat. Deor. l.* 1.

P. 362. *Before thy mighty presence, &c.*—The very heathens imagined a commotion in Nature at the presence of the Deity.

——— Vibratus ab æthere fulgor
Cum sonitu venit, et ruere omnia visa repente.
Æneis, Lib. viii.

And in another place, Virgil:

Vix ea fatus eram, tremere omnia visa repente
Liminaque laurusque Dei, totusque moveri
Mons circum. *Æneis, Lib.* iii.

So likewise Statius:

> Mirabar cur templa mihi tremuere Dianæ.
>
> *Theb. Lib.* iv.

And Seneca:

> — Imo mugit e fundo solum,
> Tonat dies serenus, ac totis domus
> Ut fracta tectis crepuit. *Thyestes, Act.* ii.

P. 362. *Thou from the morning womb, &c.*—Psalm cx. 3. This is a noble metaphor, to express the beauties and graces of the Holy Spirit. So that 'From the womb of the Morning' in the Psalmist, signifies this: From the heavenly light of the Gospel, which is the wing or beam whereby the Sun of Righteousness revealeth himself, and breaketh out upon the world, the people shall adorn themselves from the first forming of Christ in them, with the dews of Grace, and the gifts and emanations of the Holy Ghost: which are Love, Joy, Peace, Long Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance. Gal. v. 22, &c. When the Spirit of Christ bloweth thus upon us, and the dews of Grace are poured into our hearts, then the spices flow out, which arise from the holy Duties and Spiritual Infusions, mentioned above.

P. 362. ——— *by Elder hands.*—Rev. v. 8. The four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints; that is, the prayers of good men are as grateful to God as incense from the Tabernacle. So David, Ps. xiv. 2. Let my Prayer be directed to thee as Incense.

P. 363. *Beneath thy Olive-Branch, &c.*—Alluding to the two Olive Branches in Zecharia; ch. iv.

ver. 11 and 12, which empty the golden oil out of themselves. Amongst other expositions of which words, Junius and Tarnovius interpret them to mean the various gifts and effusions of the Holy Spirit, which are, by Christ, derived upon the Church. For Christ is called the Messiah, on account of his being anointed with the Oil of Gladness: Ps. xiv. 8. And St. John speaketh thus of the Holy Ghost: Ye have an unction from the Holy-One: 1 John ii. 20. The anointing which ye received from him, abideth in you; John ii. v. 27.

To conclude; a recovery from the small-pox, a few years ago, gave occasion to the preceding Poem. I only at first (in gratitude to the GREAT PHYSICIAN of Souls and Bodies) designed to have published this Hymn to the TRINITY upon a Recovery from Sickness. But the subject being very extensive, and capable of admitting serious reflections on the frail state of humanity, I expatiated farther upon it. It cannot be supposed that I should treat upon sickness in a medicinal, but only in a descriptive, a moral, and religious manner: the versification is varied accordingly: the descriptive parts being more poetical; the moral, more plain; and the religious, for the most part, drawn from the Holy Scriptures. I have just taken such notice of the progress of the small-pox, as may give the reader some small idea of it, without offending his imagination. These few notes are not intended for the learned reader; but added, to assist those who may not be so well acquainted with the classical and other allusions. I do not remember to have seen any other poem on the same

subject to lead me on the way, and, therefo
to be hoped, the good-natured reader will
readily excuse its blemishes.

I have here added, by way of conclusion
Notes, a short Hymn, written, (when very
in the great epidemical cold in 1732.

HYMN IN SICKNESS.

O Lord! to thee I lift my soul,
  To thee direct my eyes,
While Fate in every vapour rolls,
  And sickening Nature sighs.

Ev'n air, the vehicle of Life,
  The soft recess of breath,
Is made the harbinger of Fate,
  And poison'd dart of Death.

No gentle strains relieve my ears:
  But hark! the passing toll,
In a long, sadly solemn knell,
  Alarms, anew, my soul.

No lovely prospect meets my eye,
  But melancholy fear,
Attended with the hollow pomp
  Of Sickness and Despair.

My sins wide-staring in my face
  In ghastly guise alarm;
The pleasing sins of wanton youth,
  In many a fatal charm.

I sink beneath their black approach:
  My God! thy mercy lend!
Let Hope her healing wings diffuse;
  O snatch me from the fiend!

I feel, I feel Thy saving health:
  New raptures fill my heart:
A shining train of bliss succeeds:
  The gloomy scenes depart.

Though straining coughs this mortal frame
  To dissolution bring,
Yet dreary Death in vain affrights,
  And points in vain his sting:

If gracious Heaven at that sad hour
  Its guardian arm extend:
If Angels watch my parting soul,
  And save me at my end.

O LORD, or let me live or die,
  Thy holy Will be done!
But let me live alone to THEE,
  And die in THEE alone.

HYMN TO MAY.

PREFACE.

As Spenser is the most descriptive and florid of all our English writers, I attempted to imitate his manner, in the following vernal Poem. I have been very sparing of the antiquated words, which are too frequent in most of the imitations of this author: however, I have introduced a few here and there, which are explained at the bottom of each page where they occur. Shakspeare is the Poet of Nature, in adapting the affections and passions to his characters; and Spenser in describing her delightful scenes and rural beauties. His lines are most musically sweet; and his descriptions most delicately abundant, even to a wantonness of painting; but still it is the music and painting of Nature. We find no ambitious ornaments or epigrammatical turns, in his writings, but a beautiful simplicity: which pleases far above the glitter of pointed wit. I endeavoured to avoid the affectation of the one, without any hopes of attaining the graces of the other kind of writing.

> Te sequor, O nostræ gentis decus! inque tuis nunc
> Fixa pedum pono pressis vestigia signis:
> Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem
> Quod Te imitari aveo: Quid enim contendat Hirundo
> Cycnis?—— LUCRETIUS.

A modern writer has, I know, objected against running the verse into alternate and stanza: but Mr. Prior's authority is sufficient for me, who observes that it allows a greater variety, and still preserves the dignity of the verse. As I professed myself in this canto to take Spenser for my model

I chose the stanza; which I think adds both a sweetness and solemnity at the same time to subjects of this rural and flowery nature. The most descriptive of our old Poets have always used it, from Chaucer down to Fairfax, and even long after him. I followed Fletcher's measure in his Purple Island; a poem, printed at Cambridge in 12 Cantos, in quarto, scarce heard of in this age, yet the best in the allegorical way, (next to the Fairy Queen) in the English language. The Alexandrine line, I think, is peculiarly graceful at the end, and is an improvement on Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis. After all, Spenser's Hymns will excuse me for using this measure; and Scaliger, in the third Book of his Poetics, tells us, (from Didymus) that the Hymns of the Athenians were sung to the lyre, the pipe or some musical instrument: and this of all other kinds of verse is certainly Lyrical. But enough of the stanza: for (as Sir William Davenant observes in his admirable Preface to Gondibert) numbers in verse, like distinct kinds of music, are composed to the uncertain and different taste of several ears. I hope I have no apology to make for describing the beauties, the pleasures, and the loves of the Season in too tender or too florid a manner. The nature of the subject required a luxuriousness of versification, and a softness of sentiment; but they are pure and chaste at the same time: otherwise this Canto had neither been ever written or offered to the public. If the sentiments and verse be florid and tender, I shall excuse myself in the words of Virgil (though not in his sense)

——Nunc molissima fandi
tempora!

HYMN TO MAY.

—Nunc formosissimus Annus.
VIRGIL.

ARGUMENT.

Subject proposed. Invocation of May. Description of her: her operations on Nature. Bounty recommended; in particular at this season. Vernal apostrophe. Love the ruling passion in May. The celebration of Venus her birth-day in this month. Rural retirement in spring. Conclusion.

ETHEREAL daughter of the lusty Spring,
And sweet Favonius, ever-gentle MAY!
Shall I, unblam'd, presume of thee to sing,
And with thy living colours gild my lay!
Thy genial spirit mantles in my brain;
My numbers languish in a softer vein:
I pant, too emulous, to flow in Spenser's strain.

Say, mild Aurora of the blooming year,
With storms when Winter blackens Nature's face
When whirling winds the howling forest tear,
And shake the solid mountains from their base:
Say, what refulgent chambers of the sky
Veil thy beloved glories from the eye, [die
For which the nations pine, and Earth's fair childre

Where Leda's Twins,* forth from their diamond
Alternate, o'er the Night their beams divide; [tower,
In light embosom'd, happy, and secure
From Winter rage, thou choosest to abide.
Blest residence! for, there, as poets tell,
The powers of Poetry and Wisdom dwell;†
Apollo wakes the Arts; the Muses strike the shell.
Certes‡ o'er Rhedicyna's laurel'd mead,
(For ever spread, ye laurels, green and new!)
The brother-stars their gracious nurture shed,
And secret blessings of poetic dew.
They bathe their horses in the learned flood,
With flame recruited for the' ethereal road;
And deem fair Isis' swans§ fair as their father-god.
No sooner April, trim'd with girlands‖ gay,
Rains fragrance o'er the world, and kindly showers;
But, in the eastern pride of beauty, May,
To gladden earth, forsakes her heavenly bowers,
Restoring Nature from her palsied state.
April, retire; ne¶ longer, Nature, wait:
Soon may she issue from the Morning's golden gate.
Come, bounteous May! in fulness of thy might,
Lead, briskly, on the mirth-infusing hours,
All-recent from the bosom of delight,
With nectar, nurtur'd; and involv'd in flowers:
By Spring's sweet blush, by Nature's teeming womb;
By Hebe's dimply smile, by Flora's bloom:
By Venus' self (for Venus' self demands thee) come!

* Castor and Pollux.

† The Gemini are supposed to preside over learned men. See Pontanus, in his beautiful poem called Urania. Lib. 2. De Gemini.

‡ Surely, certainly. *Ibid.* Rhedicyna, Oxford.

§ Jupiter deceived Leda in the shape of a swan, as she was bathing herself in the river Eurotas.

‖ Garlands. ¶ Nor.

By the warm sighs, in dewy even-tide,
Of melting maidens, in the woodbine groves,
To pity loosen'd, soften'd down from pride;
By billing turtles, and by cooing doves;
By the youth's plainings stealing on the air,
(For youths will plain, though yielding be the fair)
Hither, to bless the maidens and the youths, repair.
With dew bespangled, by the hawthorn buds,
With freshness breathing, by the daisied plains,
By the mix'd music of the warbling woods,
And jovial roundelays* of nymphs and swains;
In thy full energy, and rich array,
Delight of earth and Heaven! O blessed May;
From Heaven descend to earth. on earth vouchsafe to stay.
She comes!—a silken camus,† emral'd-green,
Gracefully loose, adown her shoulders flows,
(Fit to enfold the limbs of Paphos' queen)
And with the labours of the needle glows,
Purfled‡ by Nature's hand! The amorous air
And musky western breezes, fast, repair, [hair.
Her mantle proud to swell, and wanton with her
Her hair (but rather threads of light it seems)
With the gay honours of the Spring intwin'd,
Copious, unbound, in nectar'd ringlets streams,
Floats glittering on the sun, and scents the wind,
Love-sick with odours!—Now to order roll'd,
It melts upon her bosom's dainty mould,
Or, curling round her waste, disparts its wavy gold.
Young circling roses, blushing, round them throw
The sweet abundance of their purple rays,
And lilies, dip'd in fragrance, freshly blow,
With blended beauties, in her angel-face.

* Songs. † A light gown. ‡ Flourished with a needle.

e humid radiance beaming from her eyes
e air and seas illumes, the earth and skies;
d open, where she smiles, the sweets of Paradise.
Zephyr's wing the laughing goddess view,
ıtilling balm. She cleaves the buxom air,
ended by the silver-footed Dew,
e ravages of winter to repair.
: gives her naked bosom to the gales,
r naked bosom down the ether sails;
r bosom breathes delight; her breath the Spring
exhales.
as the phœnix, in Arabian skies,
w-burnish'd from his spicy funeral pyres,
large, in roseal undulation,* flies;
plumage dazzles, and the gazer tires:
ɔund their king the plumy nations wait,
end his triumph, and augment his state:
towering, claps his wings, and wins the' ethe-
real height.
round this phœnix of the gaudy Year
housand, nay ten thousand Sports and Smiles,
ttering in gold, along the hemisphere,
: praises chant; her praises glad the isles.
ıscious of her approach (to deck her bowers)
th from her fruitful lap and bosom pours
'aste of springing sweets, and voluntary flowers.

Pliny tells us, Lib. 11, that the phœnix is about the bigness ın eagle: the feathers round the neck shining like gold, the y of a purple colour, the tail blue, with feathers resembling ;s. See Claudian's fine Poem on that subject, and Marcellus ıatus, who has a short dissertation on the phœnix in his ob- ations on Tacitus. Annal. Lib. 6. Westley on Job, and Sir ». Brown's Vulgar Errors.

Narcissus* fair, in snowy velvet gown'd;
Ah, foolish! still to love the fountain-brim:
Sweet Hyacinth,† by Phœbus erst‡ bemoan'd;
And tulip, flaring in her powder'd trim.
Whate'er, Armida,§ in thy gardens blew;
Whate'er the sun inhales, or sips the dew;
Whate'er compose the chaplet on Ianthe's brow.

He who undaz'd‖ can wander o'er her face,
May gain upon the solar blaze at noon;—
What more than female sweetness, and a grace
Peculiar! save, Ianthe, thine alone,
Ineffable effusion of the day!
So very much the same, that lovers say,
May is Ianthe; or the dear Ianthe May.

So far as doth the harbinger of Day
The lesser lamps of Night in sheen¶ excel:
So far in sweetness and in beauty May
Above all other months doth bear the bell.
So far as May doth other months exceed,
So far in virtue and in goodlihead,**
Above all other nymphs Ianthe bears the meed.††

* A beautiful youth who, beholding his face in a fountain, fell in love with himself, and pining away, was changed into a flower which bears his name. See Ovid, Metamorph. Lib. 3.

† Beloved, and turned into a flower, by Apollo. See the story in Ovid, Met. Lib. 10. There is likewise a curious dialogue in Lucian betwixt Mercury and Apollo on this subject. Servius, in his Notes on Virgil's second Bucolic, takes the Hyacinth to be the Vaccinium of the Latins, bearing some similitude with the name.

‡ Formerly: long ago.

§ See Tasso's Il Goffredo, Canto 16.

‖ Undazzled. ¶ Brightness, shining. ** Beauty.

†† Prize.

Welcome! as to a youthful poet, wine,
To fire his fancy, and enlarge his soul:
He weaves the laurel-chaplet with the vine,
And grows immortal as he drains the bowl.
Welcome! as beauty to the love-sick swain,
For which he long had sigh'd but sigh'd in vain:
He darts into her arms; quick vanishes his pain.

The drowsy Elements, arous'd by thee,
Roll to harmonious measures, active all!
Earth, Water, Air, and Fire, with feeling glee,
Exult to celebrate thy festival.
Fire glows intenser; softer blows the Air; [fair:
More smooth the Waters flow; Earth smiles more
Earth, Water, Air, and Fire, thy gladdening impulse share.

What boundless tides of splendour o'er the skies,
O'erflowing brightness! stream their golden rays!
Heaven's azure kindles with the varying dyes!
Reflects the glory, and returns the blaze.
Air whitens; wide the tracts of ether been
With colours damask'd rich, and goodly sheen,
And all above is blue; and all below is green.

At thy approach, the wild waves' loud uproar,
And foamy surges of the maddening main,
Forget to heave their mountains to the shore;
Diffus'd into the level of the plain.
For thee, the Halcyon builds her summer's nest;
For thee, the Ocean smooths her troubled breast,
Gay from thy placid smiles, in thy own purple drest.

Have ye not seen, in gentle even-tide.
When Jupiter the earth hath richly shower'd,
Striding the clouds, a Bow dispredden* wide
As if with light inwove, and gaily flower'd

* Spread.

With bright variety of blending dyes?
White, purple, yellow, melt along the skies,
Alternate colours sink, alternate colours rise.

The Earth's embroidery then have ye ey'd,
And smile of blossoms, yellow, purple, white;
Their vernal-tinctur'd leaves, luxurious, died
In Flora's livery, painted by the light.
Light's painted children in the breezes play,
Lay out their dewy bosoms to the ray,
Their soft enamel spread, and beautify the day.

From the wide altar of the foodful Earth [roll;
The flowers, the herbs, the plants, their incense
The orchards swell the ruby-tinctur'd birth;
The vermil gardens breathe the spicy soul.
Grateful to May, the nectar-spirit flies,
The wafted clouds of lavish'd odours rise,
The zephyr's balmy burthen, worthy of the skies.

The Bee, the golden daughter of the Spring,
From mead to mead, in wanton labour, roves,
And loads its little thigh, or gilds its wing
With all the essence of the flushing groves:
Extracts the aromatic soul of flowers,
And, humming in delight, its waxen bowers [hours.
Fills with the luscious spoils, and lives ambrosial

Touch'd by thee, May, the flocks and lusty droves
That low in pastures, or on mountains bleat,
Revive their frolics and renew their loves,
Stung to the marrow with a generous heat.
The stately courser, bounding o'er the plain,
Shakes to the winds the honours of his mane,
(High-arch'd his neck) and, snuffing, hopes the
dappled train.

The aëreal songsters sooth the listening groves:
The mellow thrush, the ouzle* sweetly shrill,
And little linnet celebrate their loves
In hawthorn valley, or on tufted hill;
The soaring lark, the lowly nightingale,
A thorn her pillow, trills her doleful tale,
And melancholy music dies along the dale.

This gay exuberance of gorgeous Spring,
The gilded mountain, and the herbag'd vale,
The woods that blossom, and the birds that sing,
The murmuring fountain and the breathing dale:
The dale, the fountains, birds and woods delight,
The vales, the mountains and the Spring invite,
Yet unadorn'd by May, no longer charm the sight.

When Nature laughs around, shall man alone,
Thy image, hang (ah me!) the sickly head?
When Nature sings, shall Nature's glory groan,
And languish for the pittance poor of bread!
O may the man that shall his image scorn,
Alive, be ground with hunger, most forlorn, [torn.
Die unanell'd;† and dead, by dogs and kites be

Curs'd may he be, (as if he were not so)
Nay doubly curs'd be such a breast of steel,
Which never melted at another's woe,
Nor tenderness of bowels knew to feel.
His heart is black as hell, in flowing store
Who hears the needy crying at his door, [be poor.
Who hears them cry, ne recks;‡ but suffers them

But blest, O more than doubly blest be he!
Let Honour crown him and eternal Rest,
Whose bosom, the sweet fount of Charity,
Flows out to nourse§ Innocence distress'd.

* Blackbird.
† Without a funeral knell.
‡ *Nor is concerned.*
§ To nurse.

His ear is open to the widow's cries,
His hand the orphan's cheek of sorrow dries;
Like Mercy's self he looks on Want with Pity's eyes.

In this blest Season, pregnant with delight,
Ne* may the boading owl with screeches wound
The solemn silence of the quiet night,
Ne croaking raven, with unhallow'd sound,
Ne damned ghost affray† with deadly yell
The waking lover, rais'd by mighty spell,
To pale the stars, till Hesper shine it back to hell.

Ne witches rifle gibbets, by the moon,
(With horror winking, trembling all with fear)
Of many a clinking chain, and canker'd bone:
Nor imp in visionary shape appear,
To blast the thriving verdure of the plain;
Ne let hobgoblin, ne the ponk, profane
With shadowy glare the light, and mad the bursting [brain.

Yet fairy elves (so ancient custom's‡ will)
The green-gown'd fairy-elves, by starry sheen,§
May gambol or in valley or on hill,
And leave their footsteps on the circled green.
Full lightly trip it, dapper Mab, around;
Full featly,‖ Oberon, thou, o'er grass-turf bound:
Mab brushes off no dew-drops, Oberon prints no ground.

* Nor. † Affright.

‡ The Lemuria, or rites sacred to the Lemures, were celebrated by the Romans in May. See Ovid. Fast. l. 5, &c. They imagined the Lemures (in English, Fairies) to be like ghosts of deceased persons: but our traditional accounts are very different in respect to the nature of Fairies. Shakspeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream, Drayton's Fairy Tale, and a celebrated 'Old Ballad,' are master-pieces in their kind.

§ Brightness. ‖ Nimbly.

Ne* bloody rumours violate the ear,
Of cities sack'd and kingdoms desolate,
With plague or sword, with pestilence or war;
Ne rueful murder stain thy era-date;
Ne shameless calumny, for fell despite,
The foulest fiend that e'er blasphem'd the light,
At lovely lady rail, nor grin at courteous knight.

Ne wailing in our streets nor fields be heard,
Ne voice of misery assault the heart;
Ne fatherless from table be debar'd;
Ne piteous tear from eye of sorrow start;
But plenty, pour thyself into the bowl
Of bounty-head; may never want control [soul.
That good, good honest man, who feeds the famish'd

Now let the trumpet's martial thunders sleep;
The viol wake alone, and tender flute:
The Phrygian lyre with sprightly fingers sweep,
And, Erato, dissolve the Lydian lute.
Yet Clio frets, and burns, with honest pain,
To rouse and animate the martial strain, [plain.
While British banners flame o'er many a purpled

The trumpet sleeps, but soon for thee shall wake,
Illustrious Chief! to sound thy mighty name,
(Snatch'd from the malice of Lethean lake)
Triumphant swelling from the mouth of Fame.
Meanwhile, disdain not (so the virgins pray)
This rosy crown, with myrtle wove and bay;
(Too humble crown I ween) the offering of May.

And while the virgins hail thee with their voice,
Heaping thy crowded way with greens and flowers,
And in the fondness of their heart rejoice
To sooth, with dance and song, thy gentler hours:

* Nor.

Indulge the season, and with sweet repair
Embay thy limbs, the vernal beauties share :
Then blaze in arms again, renew'd for future wa

Britannia's happy isle derives from May
The choicest blessings liberty bestows:
When royal Charles (for ever hail the day!)
In mercy triumph'd o'er ignoble foes.
Restor'd with him, the arts the drooping head
Gaily again uprear'd; the Muses' shade [ray'd
With fresher honours bloom'd, in greener trim a

And thou, the goodliest blossom of our isles!
Great Frederick's and his Augusta's joy,
Thy native mouth approv'd, with infant smiles,
Sweet as the smiling May, imperial boy!
Britannia hopes thee for her future lord,
Lov'd as thy parents, only not ador'd!
Whene'er a George is born, Charles is again restor'd

O may his father's pant for finer fame,
And boundless bounty head to humankind;
His grandsires' glory, and his uncles' name,
Renown'd in war! inflame his ardent mind:
So arts shall flourish 'neath his equal sway,
So arms the hostile nations wide affray;
The laurel, Victory; Apollo, wear the bay.

Through kind infusion of celestial power,
The dullard earth May quickeneth with delight:
Full suddenly the seeds of joy recure*
Elastic spring, and force within empight.†
If senseless elements invigorate prove
By genial May, and heavy matter move, [love
Shall shepherdesses cease, shall shepherds fail t

* Recover. † Placed, fixed.

Ye shepherdesses, in a goodly round,
Purpled with health, as in the greenwood shade,
Incontinent ye thump the echoing ground
And deftly* lead the dance along the glade;
(O may no showers your merry-makes affray!)
Hail at the opening, at the closing day,
All hail, ye bonnibels,† to your own season, May.

Nor yet absent yourselves, ye shepherd swains,
But lend to dance and song the liberal May,
And while in jocund ranks you beat the plains,
Your flocks shall nibble and your lambkins play,
Frisking in glee. To May your garlands bring,
And ever and anon her praises sing:
The woods shall echo May, with May the valleys ring.

Your May-pole deck with flowery coronal;
Sprinkle the flowery coronal with wine;
And in the nimble-footed galliard, all,
Shepherds and shepherdesses, lively, join.
Hither from village sweet and hamlet fair,
From bordering cot and distant glen‡ repair:
Let youth indulge its sport, to eld§ bequeath its care.

Ye wanton Dryads and light-tripping Fawns,
Ye jolly Satyrs, full of lustyhead,‖
And ye that haunt the hills, the brooks, the lawns;
O come with rural chaplets gay dispread:
With heel so nimble wear the springing grass,
To shrilling bagpipe, or to tinkling brass;
Or foot it to the reed: Pan pipes himself apace.

* Finely.
† Pretty women.
‡ A country hamlet.
§ Old age.
‖ Vigour.

In this soft season, when creation smil'd,
A quivering splendour on the ocean hung,
And from the fruitful froth, his fairest child,
The queen of bliss and beauty, Venus sprung.
The dolphins gambol o'er the watery way,
Carol the Naiads, while the Triton's play,
And all the sea-green Sisters bless the holy-day.

In honour of her natal month the queen
Of bliss and beauty consecrates her hours,
Fresh as her cheek, and as her brow serene,
To buxom ladies, and their paramours.
Love tips with golden alchymy his dart;
With rapturous anguish, with an honey'd smart
Eye languishes on eye, and heart dissolves on heart.

A softly swelling hill, with myrtles crown'd,
(Myrtles to Venus algates* sacred been)
Hight Acidale, the fairest spot on ground,
For ever fragrant and for ever green,
O'erlooks the windings of a shady vale,
By beauty form'd for amorous regale.
Was ever hill so sweet, as sweetest Acidale?

All down the sides, the sides profuse of flowers,
An hundred rills, in shining mazes, flow
Through mossy grottos, amaranthine bowers,
And form a laughing flood in vale below:
Where oft their limbs the Loves and Graces bay,†
(When Summer sheds insufferable day) [play.
And sport, and dive, and flounce in wantonness of

No noise o'ercomes the silence of the shades,
Save short-breath'd vows, the dear excess of joy:
Or harmless giggle of the youths and maids,
Who yield obeisance to the Cyprian boy:

* Ever. † Bathe.

Or lute, soft sighing in the passing gale;
Or fountain, gurgling down the sacred vale,
Or hymn to beauty's queen, or lover's tender tale.

Here Venus revels, here maintains her court
In light festivity and gladsome game:
The young and gay, in frolic troops resort,
Withouten censure and withouten blame.
In pleasure steep'd, and dancing in delight,
Night steals upon the day, the day on night:
Each knight his lady loves; each lady loves her knight.

Where lives the man, (if such a man there be)
In idle wilderness or desert drear,
To beauty's sacred power an enemy?
Let foul fiends harrow* him; I'll drop no tear.
I deem that carl,† by beauty's power unmov'd,
Hated of heaven, of none but hell approv'd:
O may he never love, O never be belov'd!

Hard is the heart, unmelted by thee, May!
Unconscious of love's nectar-tickling sting,
And, unrelenting, cold to Beauty's ray;
Beauty the mother and the child of Spring!
Beauty and Wit, declare the sexes even;
Beauty to woman, Wit to man is given;
Neither the slime of earth, but each the fire of Heaven.

Alliance sweet! let Beauty Wit approve,
As flowers to sunshine ope the ready breast:
Wit Beauty loves, and nothing else can love:
The best alone is grateful to the best.

* Destroy. † A clown.

Perfection has no other parallel!
Can light with darkness, doves with ravens dwell?
As soon, perdie,* shall heaven communion hold
with hell.

I sing to you, who love alone for love;
For gold the beauteous fools (O fools besure!)
Can win; though brighter Wit shall never move:
But Folly is to Wit the certain cure.
Curs'd be the men, (or be they young or old)
Curs'd be the women, who themselves have sold
To the detested bed for lucre base of gold.

Not Julia such: she higher honour deem'd
To languish in the Sulmo-poet's arms,
Than, by the potentates of earth esteem'd,
To give to sceptres and to crowns her charms.
Not Laura such: in sweet Vauclusa's vale
She listen'd to her Petrarch's amorous tale.
But did poor Colin Clout† o'er Rosalind prevail?

Howe'er that be; in Acidalian shade,‡
Embracing Julia, Ovid melts the day:
No dreams of banishment his loves invade;
Encircled in eternity of May.

* An old word for asserting any thing.

† Spenser.

‡ These three celebrated poets and lovers were all of them unhappy in their amours. Ovid was banished on account of his passion for Julia. Death deprived Petrarch of his beloved Laura very early; as he himself tells us in his account of his own life. These are his words: 'Amore acerrimo, sed unico et honesto, in adolescentia laboravi, et diutius laborassem, nisi jam tepescentem ignem mors acerba, sed utilis, extinxisset.' See his Works, Basil, fol. tom. 1. Yet others say she married another person; which is scarce probable; since Petrarch lamented her death for ten years afterwards, as appears from Sonetto 313, with a most un-

Here Petrarch with his Laura, soft reclin'd
On violets, gives sorrow to the wind:
And Colin Clout pipes to the yielding Rosalind.

Pipe on, thou sweetest of the' Arcadian train,
That e'er with tuneful breath inform'd the quill:
Pipe on, of lovers the most loving swain!
Of bliss and melody O take thy fill.
Ne envy I, if dear Ianthe smile, [style;
Though low my numbers, and though rude my
Ne quit for Acidale, fair Albion's happy isle.

Come then, Ianthe! milder than the Spring,
And grateful as the rosy month of May,
O come; the birds the hymn of Nature sing,
Inchanting wild, from every bush and spray:
Swell the green germs and teem along the vine,
A fragrant promise of the future wine,
The spirits to exalt, the genius to refine!

Let us our steps direct where father Thames,
In silver windings, draws his humid train,
And pours, where'er he rolls his naval stream,
Pomp on the city, plenty o'er the plain.
Or by the banks of Isis shall we stray,
(Ah, why so long from Isis' banks away!)
Where thousand damsels dance, and thousand
shepherds play.

common ardour of passion. Thomasinus, in his curious book, called 'Petrarcha Redivivus,' has given us two prints of Laura, with an account of her family, their loves, and his sweet retirement in Vaucluse. As for Spenser, we may conclude that his love for Rosalinda proved unsuccessful from his pathetical complaints, in several of his poems, of her cruelty. The author, therefore, thought it only a poetical kind of justice to reward them in this imaginary retreat of Lovers, for the misfortunes they really suffered here, on account of their passions.

Or choose you rather Theron's calm retreat,
Embosom'd, Surrey, in thy verdant vale,
At once the Muses' and the Graces' seat!
There gently listen to my faithful tale.
Along the dew-bright parterres let us rove,
Or taste the odours of the mazy grove:
Hark how the turtles coo: I languish too with love.

Amid the pleasaunce of Arcadian scenes,
Love steals his silent arrows on my breast;
Nor falls of water, nor enamel'd greens,
Can sooth my anguish, or invite to rest.
You, dear Ianthe, you alone impart
Balm to my wounds, and cordial to my smart:
The apple of my eye, the life-blood of my heart.

With line of silk, with hook of barbed steel,
Beneath this oaken umbrage let us lay,
And from the water's crystal bosom steal
Upon the grassy bank the finny prey:
The perch, with purple speckled manifold;
The eel, in silver labyrinth self-roll'd,
And carp, all-burnish'd o'er with drops of scaly gold.

Or shall the meads invite, with Iris-hues
And Nature's pencil gay diversified,
(For now the sun has lick'd away the dews)
Fair flushing and bedeck'd like virgin bride?
Thither, (for they invite us) we'll repair.
Collect and weave (whate'er is sweet and fair)
A posy for thy breast, a garland for thy hair.

Fair is the lily, clad in balmy snow;
Sweet is the rose, of Spring the smiling eye;
Nipt by the winds, their heads the lilies bow;
Cropt by the hand, the roses fade and die.

Though now in pride of youth and beauty drest,
O think, Ianthe, cruel time lays waste
The roses of the cheek, the lilies of the breast.

Weep not; but, rather taught by this, improve
The present freshness of thy springing prime:
Bestow thy graces on the god of Love,
Too precious for the wither'd arms of Time.
In chaste endearments, innocently gay,
Ianthe! now, now love thy Spring away,
Ere cold October blasts despoil the bloom of May.

Now up the chalky mazes of yon hill,
With grateful diligence, we wind our way;
What opening scenes our ravish'd senses fill,
And, wide, their rural luxury display!
Woods, dales, and flocks, and herds, and cots, and spires,
Villas of learned clerks, and gentle 'squires;
The villa of a friend the eye-sight never tires.

If e'er to thee and Venus, May, I strung
The gladsome lyre, when livelood* swell'd my veins,
And Eden's nymphs and Isis damsels sung
In tender elegy,† and pastoral strains;‡
Collect and shed thyself on Theron's bowers,
O green his gardens, O perfume his flowers,
O bless his morning walks and sooth his evening hours.

* Liveliness.

† Stella; sive Amores: Elegiarum Tres Libri. Written in the year 1736.

‡ Six Pastorals: written in the year 1734.

Long, Theron, with thy Annabel enjoy
The walks of Nature, still to Virtue kind,
For sacred solitude can never cloy;
The wisdom of an uncorrupted mind!
O very long may Hymen's golden chain
To earth confine you and the rural reign;
Then soar, at length, to Heaven! nor pray, O
in vain.

Where'er the Muses haunt, or poets muse,
In solitary silence sweetly tir'd,
Unloose thy bosom, May! thy stores effuse,
Thy vernal stores, by poets most desir'd,
Of living fountain, of the woodbine shade,
Of Philomela, warbling from the glade.
Thy bounty, in his verse, shall certes be repa

On Twit'nam bowers (Aonian Twit'nam bow
Thy softest plenitude of beauties shed,
Thick as the Winter stars, or Summer flower
Albè* the tuneful Master (ah!) be dead.
To Colin next he taught my youth to sing,
My reed to warble, to resound my string:
The king of shepherds he, of poets he the ki

Hail, happy scenes, where Joy would choo
dwell;
Hail, golden days, which Saturn deems his ow
Hail music, which the Muses scant† excel;
Hail flowrets, not unworthy Venus' crown.
Ye linnets, larks, ye thrushes, nightingales;
Ye hills, ye plains, ye groves, ye streams, ye
Ye ever happy scenes! all you, your Poet hai

* Although. † Scarcely.

All hail to thee, O May! the crown of all!
The recompense and glory of my song:
Ne small the recompense, ne glory small,
If gentle ladies and the tuneful throng,
With lover's myrtle, and with poet's bay
Fairly bedight,* approve the simple lay,
And think on Thomalin whene'er they hail thee,
May!

* Adorned.

END OF VOL. XXVIII.